APPENDICES

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Appendix A

Summary of
2012 Landowner Survey

Perceived Status of Big Game Populations and Suggested Hunting Season Strategies

Sheridan Biologist District

Pronghorn Antelope Areas 10, 15, 16, 109
White-tailed and Mule Deer Areas 23, 24, 26
Elk Areas 37, 38, 129

March 15, 2013

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It is imperative that the Wyoming Game & Fish Department (WGFD) works closely with private landowners to manage wildlife populations, specifically deer and pronghorn antelope, in areas that are predominately private lands. In order to gauge landowner perceptions and opinions in an effective manner, the WGFD conducted a survey of landowners who historically allow hunting following the 2007 hunting season. We solicited perceived population status of big game herds and suggestions for 2009 hunting season strategies. A total of 178 landowners within the Sheridan Biologist District were queried on their perceptions of pronghorn antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer and elk populations on their properties, as well as what hunting season adjustments they would suggest for the 2013 seasons.

Landowners were given the opportunity to choose between three options based on their perception of big game populations (i.e. below, at, or above "desired" levels) for their property. "Desired population" is a measure of landowner acceptance or tolerance of wildlife, and not necessarily correlated to the post-season population management objective established by the WGFD. Landowners were given three options for suggested season strategies (i.e. more conservative, same, or more liberal). Landowners were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments. Attached is a copy of the survey sent to landowners.

Seventy-two useable surveys were returned for a response rate of 40%. Results are provided below. Not all landowners responded to each question or for all species. Some landowners are credited with a response in more than one hunt area. Therefore, total responses may exceed the number of actual survey returns.

Pronghorn Antelope

Table 1. Summary of survey results for pronghorn antelope grouped by hunt area and herd unit.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
10	0	7	3	1	6	2
16	3	6	4	0	10	2
SubTot (n=23)	3 (13%)	13 (57%)	7 (30%)	1 (5%)	16 (76%)	4 (19%)
15 (n=29)	4 (14%)	17 (59%)	8 (28%)	0	17 (68%)	8 (32%)
109 (n=22)	0	16 (73%)	6 (27%)	0	15 (65%)	8 (35%)
2011 (n=41)	5 (12%)	19 (46%)	17 (41%)	2 (5%)	25 (61%)	14 (34%)
2010 (n=53)	5 (9%)	26 (49%)	22 (42%)	1 (2%)	36 (68%)	16 (30%)
2009 (n=58)	10 (17%)	29 (50%)	19 (33%)	4 (7%)	40 (69%)	14 (24%)
2008 (n=29)	5 (17%)	11 (38%)	13 (45%)	2 (7%)	16 (55%)	11 (38%)
2007 (n=53)	5 (9%)	27 (51%)	21 (40%)	0 (0%)	35 (66%)	18 (34%)
2006 (n=36)	2 (6%)	18 (50%)	16 (44%)	1 (3%)	21 (60%)	13 (37%)
2005 (n=39)	6 (15%)	20 (51%)	13 (33%)	2 (5%)	22 (58%)	14 (37%)
2004 (n=37)	3 (8%)	26 (70%)	8 (22%)	1 (3%)	37 (73%)	9 (24%)
2003 (n=54)	9 (17%)	29 (54%)	16 (30%)	2 (4%)	38 (75%)	11 (21%)
2002 (n=55)	15 (27%)	31 (56%)	9 (16%)	7 (13%)	36 (69%)	9 (17%)
2001 (n=57)	19 (33%)	32 (58%)	5 (9%)	8 (15%)	40 (77%)	4 (8%)
2000 (n=56)	25 (45%)	28 (50%)	3 (5%)	13 (23%)	38 (68%)	5 (9%)

Ucross Herd Unit (hunt areas 10, 16): We received 23 responses from landowners in this herd unit. Most responses (87%) indicated the pronghorn population is at or above desired levels. The majority (95%) suggests maintaining or liberalizing the current season strategy. The current population simulation estimates this population is significantly above the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. Most pronghorn within this herd unit occur on private lands, especially in Area 10, with limited opportunities for public land hunting. Some hunting opportunity is provided on a Walk-In Area and small scattered parcels of public lands in Area 16.

Clearmont Herd Unit (hunt area 15): We received 23 responses from landowners in this herd unit. Most respondents (86%) thought the population at or above desired levels. This population is estimated to be significantly above the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. The majority of land within the herd unit is private and landowners generally control access to public lands. There is very little opportunity for public-lands antelope hunting in this herd unit. Most landowners (68%) suggested maintaining the current season structure while 32% of respondents suggested liberalizing season strategies.

Beckton Herd Unit (hunt area 109): We received 22 responses from landowners in this herd unit. All landowners indicated the population was at or above desired levels. Population estimates, based on winter counts, indicated this herd unit is substantially above the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. This population will likely never be reduced to the population objective due to limited access and urban

development which hinders safe hunting opportunities. Most landowners (65%) favored maintaining current season strategies, while the rest desired more liberal season strategies.

Mule Deer

Table 2. Summary of survey results for mule deer grouped by hunt area and herd unit.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
23	10	12	6	6	17	5
26	10	10	1	7	13	0
SubTot (n=49)	20 (41%)	22 (45%)	7 (14%)	13 (27%)	30 (63%)	5 (10%)
24 (n=26)	15 (58%)	7 (27%)	4 (15%)	10 (38%)	12 (46%)	4 (15%)
2011 (n=62)	28 (45%)	26 (42%)	8 (13%)	11 (17%)	43 (69%)	8 (13%)
2010 (n=59)	27(46%)	20 (34%)	12 (20%)	13(22(%)	36(61%)	10(17%)
2009 (n=59)	27 (46%)	20 (34%)	12 (20%)	13 (22%)	36 (61%)	10 (17%)
2008 (n=28)	4 (14%)	19 (68%)	5 (18%)	1 (4%)	24 (86%)	3 (11%)
2007 (n=59)	20 (34%)	33 (56%)	6 (10%)	10 (17%)	39 (66%)	10 (17%)
2006 (n=41)	15 (37%)	15 (37%)	11 (27%)	5 (12%)	27 (65%)	9 (22%)
2005 (n=46)	7 (16%)	23 (51%)	15 (33%)	4 (9%)	27 (59%)	15 (33%)
2004 (n=48)	12 (25%)	21 (44%)	15 (31%)	7 (8%)	27 (56%)	14 (29%)
2003 (n=65)	15 (24%)	34 (55%)	13 (21%)	8 (12%)	42 (65%)	15 (23%)
2002 (n=65)	31(48%)	23 (35%)	11 (17%)	16 (25%)	37 (59%)	10 (16%)
2001 (n=79)	38 (48%)	34 (43%)	7 (9%)	19 (25%)	47 (62%)	10 (13%)
2000 (n=67)	22 (32%)	38 (57%)	7 (11%)	15 (24%)	45 (71%)	3 (5%)

North Bighorn Herd Unit (hunt area 24): We received 26 responses from landowners in this herd area. Seven respondents (27%) thought the population was at desired levels while four (15%) respondents thought the population was above desired levels and 15 (58%) thought the population was below desired levels. This is a change from recent years where most landowners felt the population was at or above desired levels. This likely reflects localized decreased in the mule deer numbers due to environmental conditions and increased doe/fawn harvest. Current population simulations estimate the population is below the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. The most of landowners (46%) suggested maintaining current season strategies (i.e. 30 September archery season, 15 day general deer season in October and doe/fawn permits) while the other respondents were split between more conservative (38%) and more liberal (15%) season structure.

Powder River Herd Unit (hunt areas 23, 26): We received 49 responses from landowners within these hunt areas. Most respondents (59%) thought the population was at or above desired levels, while 41% thought the population was below desired levels. This is a change in perception from recent years when 90% or more of respondents thought this population was at or above desired levels. Current population simulations estimate the population is slightly below the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. Most landowners (63%) favored maintaining the current season structure (i.e. 30 day September archery season, 15 day general deer season in October and an extended doe/fawn season).

White-tailed Deer

Table 3. Summary of survey results for white-tailed deer grouped by hunt area and herd unit.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
23	2	6	14	0	13	9
24	1	6	22	0	10	21
26	0	6	15	0	7	13
2012 (n=72)	3 (4%)	18 (25%)	51 (71%)	0	30 (41%)	42 (59%)
2011(n=63)	2(3%)	19(30%)	42(67%)	0	26(41%)	37(59%)
2010 (n=55)	2(4%)	16(29%)	37(67%)	0	23(42%)	32(58%)
2009 (n=53)	4 (7%)	19 (36%)	30 (57%)	1(2%)	29 (55%)	23 (43%)
2008 (n=26)	5 (19%)	8 (31%)	13 (50%)	2 (8%)	12 (46%)	12 (46%)
2007 (n=48)	8 (17%)	14 (29%)	26 (54%)	3 (6%)	22 (46%)	23 (48%)
2006 (n=36)	4 (11%)	11 (31%)	21 (58%)	1 (3%)	19 (53%)	16 (44%)
2005 (n=40)	3 (8%)	11 (28%)	26 (65%)	2 (5%)	20 (51%)	17 (44%)
2004 (n=37)	2 (5%)	11 (30%)	24 (65%)	0	14 (38%)	23 (62%)
2003 (n=57)	6 (10%)	14 (25%)	37 (65%)	4 (7%)	25 (45%)	27 (48%)
2002 (n=58)	11 (19%)	19 (33%)	28 (48%)	7 (13%)	28 (50%)	21 (37%)
2001 (n=68)	13 (19%)	30 (44%)	25 (37%)	6 (9%)	45 (66%)	17 (25%)
2000 (n=58)	11 (19%)	21 (36%)	26 (45%)	6 (10%)	31 (53%)	21 (37%)

Powder River Herd Unit (hunt areas 23, 24, 26): We received 72 responses from landowners in these hunts areas. The majority (97%) thought the white-tailed deer population was at or above desired levels, while three landowners (3%) felt the population was below desired levels. Current population simulations estimate this population is significantly above the post-season population management objective as established by the WGFD. All landowners suggested maintaining or liberalizing current season strategies. During the 2012 season, hunters could harvest any white-tailed deer for up to 91 days, including the 30-day September archery season, with additional time allowed for doe/fawn harvest, depending on hunt area. In 2012, 3,900 doe/fawn licenses were issued in these hunt areas, with 1,500 restricted to white-tailed deer only and the balance valid for either mule or white-tailed deer doe or fawn.

Numerous landowners have expressed concern and frustration with the number of white-tailed deer, especially in the Bighorn area. It is common to see several hundred deer in one field. Landowners in these areas have committed to increasing access for hunters to harvest antlerless deer. The number of deer – vehicle collisions has also increased, most notably along the Big Goose Road and Highway 87/335 from Sheridan to Bighorn.

Elk

Table 4. Summary of survey results for elk.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
37	6	4	3	1	5	6
38	0	3	0	0	1	2
Sub Tot (n=16)	6 (38%)	7 (44%)	3 (18%)	1 (7%)	6 (40%)	8 (53%)
129 (n=11)	4 (36%)	3 (27%)	4 (36%)	1 (9%)	7 (64%)	3 (27%)
2011 (n=20)	7 (35%)	8 (40%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	11 (55%)	5 (25%)
2010 (n=19)	10(53%)	5(26%)	4(21%)	7(37%)	7(37%)	5(26%)
2009 (n=19)	10 (53%)	5 (26%)	4 (21%)	7 (37%)	7 (37%)	5 (26%)
2008 (n=12)	6 (50%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	10 (83%)	1 (18%)
2007 (n=16)	5 (31%)	6 (38%)	5 (31%)	2 (13%)	8 (50%)	5 (31%)
2006 (n=20)	8 (40%)	7 (35%)	5 (25%)	5 (25%)	8 (40%)	7 (35%)
2005 (n=18)	4 (22%)	10 (56%)	4 (22%)	4 (22%)	9 (50%)	5 (28%)
2004 (n=12)	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	0	0	10 (83%)	2 (17%)
2003 (n=17)	5 (31%)	9 (56%)	2 (13%)	3 (21%)	9 (64%)	2 (14%)
2002 (n=20)	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	16 (80%)	3 (15%)
2001 (n=23)	6 (26%)	12 (52%)	5 (22%)	4 (17%)	14 (61%)	5 (22%)
2000 (n=10)	3 (30%)	4 (40%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	7 (70%)	2 (20%)

North Bighorn Herd Unit (hunt areas 37, 38): We received 16 responses from landowners in these hunt areas, all but three from landowners in hunt area 37. Well over half (82%) of the landowners thought the elk population was at or below desired levels, while the rest thought elk numbers were above desired levels. Most landowners supported similar or more liberal season strategies..

Hunt Area 129: We received responses from 11 landowners in this hunt area. Area 129 encompasses all lands in Campbell, Crook, Johnson, Natrona, Sheridan, and Weston counties outside an established elk hunt area. This area was established in 2001 to address expanding elk numbers outside established hunt areas and herd units. Responses were mixed, with some landowners desiring more elk while others want longer seasons so they can kill more elk and reduce their numbers. The WGFD does not wish to actively manage elk in these areas. Most landowners favored maintaining the current season structure.

Appendix B

Summary of
2012 Landowner Survey

Perceived Status of Deer and Pronghorn Populations
And Suggested Hunting Season Strategies

Gillette Biologist District

June 2013

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Overview

Questionnaire surveys of landowners within the Gillette Biologist District were conducted following each hunting season from 1996 through 2012. Questionnaires were included with a mailing of the landowner coupon form. Approximately 400 surveys are mailed each year. Landowners completed the surveys and returned them with their coupon forms to their local game warden by March 1st of the following year.

The questions asked for each of the surveys were essentially the same with only slight variation between the first survey and the subsequent surveys. Landowners were asked if the pronghorn and deer herds on their ranches were below desired levels, at desired levels, or above desired levels. They were also asked if they thought that the next year's hunting season should be more conservative, about the same, or more liberal than the previous hunting season.

A brief summary of the 2012 responses relative to the 2013 hunting season is as follows.

Pronghorn Questionnaire Responses

Area 1

- 33% believe pronghorn numbers are at desired levels, while 59% believe that pronghorn are below desired levels.
- All but one respondent favor a more conservative or same season for 2013.

Area 3

- All respondents believe that numbers are low.
- All landowners desire a more conservative or the same season for 2013.

Area 7

- Both respondents believed that pronghorn were below desired levels.
- One landowner felt that the 2013 season should be the same, the other landowner did not respond to this question.

Area 17

- 70% of landowners surveyed think that pronghorn are at desired levels.
- 76% of landowners favor the same season for 2013.

Area 18

- 96% of landowners think that pronghorn numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 96% of landowners favor the same or more conservative season for 2013.

Area 19

- 100% of landowners believe that pronghorn numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 94% favor the same or more conservative season for 2013.

Area 23

- 95% of landowners surveyed believe that pronghorn numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 95% of landowners favor the same or a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 24

- 94% of landowners surveyed believe that pronghorn numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 94% favor the same or a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 26

- 89% of landowners surveyed believe that pronghorn numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 89% favor a more conservative or same season for 2013.

Area 27

- The 2 respondents felt numbers are at or below desired levels.
- Both respondents desired the same season as last year for 2013.

Overall Pronghorn Survey Results

- Sample size of 163 landowners answered the portion on pronghorn (some incomplete, only answering either the portion regarding population or season and not both, some not indicating hunt area).
- 49% of total respondents think that pronghorn numbers on their property are at desired levels with 44% indicating that pronghorn numbers on their property are below desired levels and 7% indicating that pronghorn numbers on their property are above desired levels.
- Most (64%) favor the same season for 2013 with 7% favoring a more liberal and 29% favoring a more conservative pronghorn season for 2013. Responses were very similar to those received for the 2012 season, however overall more surveys were received.

Relationship to 2012 Post-season Population Estimate, Its Objective and Landowner Desires for the 2013 Hunting Season

- North Black Hills Herd Unit is estimated to be well below objective. Overall, landowners think pronghorn are at or below the desired level and want either the same or a more conservative season for 2013. License quotas had been reduced for 2012 and were essentially sold out by the end of the season.
- Gillette Herd Unit is estimated to be slightly below objective. The majority of landowners believe the herd is at desired levels and most want the same season for 2013.
- Pumpkin Buttes Herd Unit is estimated to be above objective. However, 95% of all landowners are indicating that the herd is at or below desired levels. 95% of landowners want the same or a more conservative season for 2013.
- Highlight Herd Unit is estimated to be below objective, also the model is poor. Most landowners believe the herd is at or below desired levels. The majority want the same or a more conservative season for 2013.
- Winter conditions were very mild in the winter of 2012-2013. The proposed 2013 seasons address lower pronghorn numbers in those areas that have been impacted by past severe

winter conditions, while continuing with persistent harvest in areas where winter conditions were less severe. Thus, proposed seasons should still be reasonable in the Gillette District.

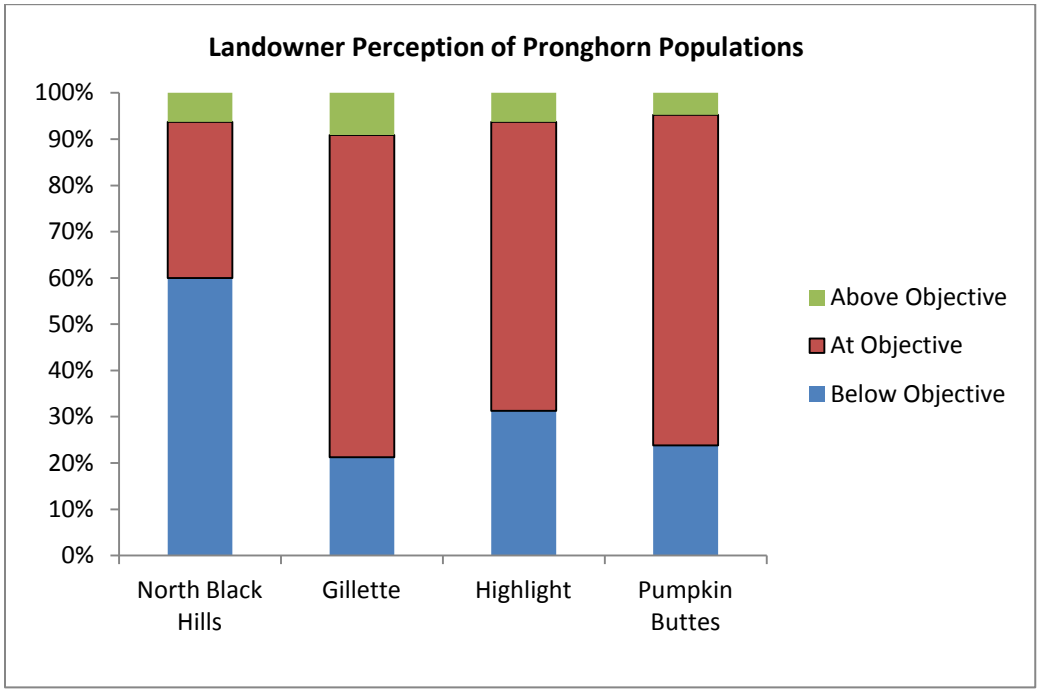


Figure 1. 2012 landowner survey results by herd unit regarding pronghorn herd size compared to herd objective

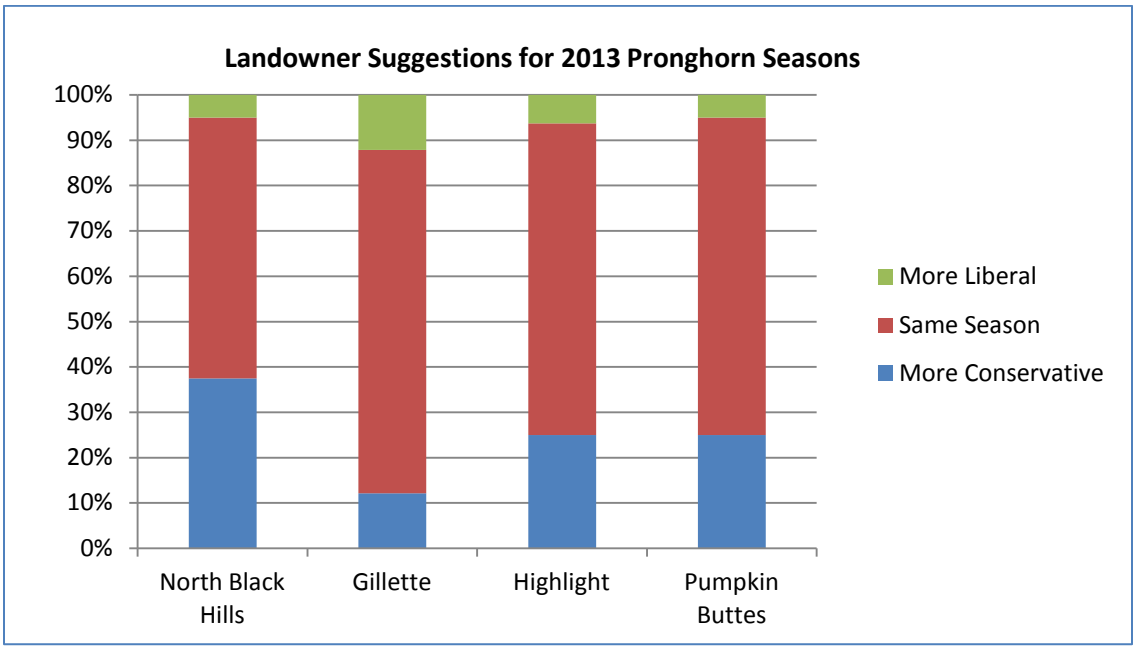


Figure 2. 2012 landowner survey results by herd unit regarding desired 2013 pronghorn hunting seasons.

Table 1. Summary of responses by landowners regarding pronghorn population levels and opinions for pronghorn antelope hunting seasons 1997-2012.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
1	16	9	2	10	15	1
2	2	2	2	1	4	1
3	6	0	0	4	2	0
7	2	2	0	1	1	0
17	7	23	3	4	25	4
18	13	11	1	9	15	1
19	11	5	0	5	10	1
23	5	15	1	5	14	1
24	5	10	1	4	11	1
26	4	4	1	4	4	1
27	1	1	0	0	2	0
YEAR						
2012	72(44%)	82(50%)	11(6%)	47(29%)	103(64%)	11(7%)
2011	30 (37%)	47 (57%)	5 (6%)	25 (32%)	49 (62%)	5 (6%)
2010	30 (33%)	45 (49%)	16 (18%)	21 (23%)	52 (57%)	18 (20%)
2009	19 (18%)	60 (56%)	29 (27%)	15 (14%)	72 (66%)	22 (20%)
2008	7 (6%)	55 (50%)	48 (44%)	9 (8%)	60 (56%)	39 (36%)
2007	7 (6%)	58 (48%)	55 (46%)	4 (3%)	69 (57%)	46 (39%)
2006	14 (11%)	58 (44%)	61 (46%)	6 (5%)	74 (56%)	53 (40%)
2005	6 (10%)	22 (35%)	34 (55%)	4 (7%)	31 (53%)	23 (40%)
2004	28 (16%)	86 (50%)	59 (34%)	12 (7%)	98 (57%)	63 (36%)
2003	30 (17%)	105 (60%)	43 (24%)	11 (6%)	109 (62%)	56 (32%)
2002	24 (18%)	78 (58%)	33 (24%)	17 (13%)	80 (59%)	38 (28%)
2001	27 (21%)	74 (59%)	25 (20%)	23 (18%)	73 (58%)	30 (24%)
2000	50 (40%)	58 (46%)	17 (14%)	33 (27%)	65 (52%)	26 (21%)
1999	48 (46%)	37 (35%)	20 (19%)	30 (29%)	47 (46%)	25 (25%)
1998	49 (37%)	64 (48%)	21 (16%)	31 (23%)	73 (54%)	31 (23%)
1997	68 (49%)	60 (43%)	11 (8%)	56 (41%)	63 (46 %)	18 (13%)

Deer Questionnaire Responses

Area 1

- 27% believe deer numbers on their property are at desired levels, while 67% believe deer numbers are below desired levels.
- 94% favor the same or a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 3

- All landowners that responded believe deer numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- All favor the same or a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 8

- There were only two respondents. One believes deer are below desired levels, one believes they are at desired levels.
- One respondent wanted same seasons as last year, the other desired a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 10

- There were only 2 respondents. Both respondents felt that deer were at desired level, and that the 2013 seasons should be the same.

Area 17

- 74% believe deer numbers on their property are below desired levels.
- 50% favor a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 18

- 97% believe deer numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 97% favor the same or a more conservative season for 2013.

Area 19

- 100% believe deer numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- 100% favor the same season or more conservative season for 2013.

Area 20

- All surveyed believe deer numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- All favor a more conservative season or same for 2013.

Area 21

- All surveyed believe deer numbers on their property are at or below desired levels.
- All favor the same or more conservative season for 2013.

Area 22

- Of five respondents, 560% believe deer are below desired levels and 20% believe deer are above desired levels.
- The majority (80%) favor the same or more conservative season for 2013.

Overall Deer Survey Results

- 160 landowners answered the deer portion of the survey (some incomplete, only answering either the portion regarding population or season and not both, some not indicating hunt area).

- Most (66%) think that deer numbers are below desired levels with 29% of the respondents indicating that the herds are at desired levels and 5% indicating that herds are above desired levels.
- Most (52%) favor a more conservative season for 2013, with 42% indicating the same season and the remaining 5% indicating the need for a more liberal season.

Relationship to 2012 Post-season Population Estimate, Its Objective and Landowner Desires for the 2013 Hunting Season

- Powder River Herd Unit is below objective. Landowners generally desire a higher population of deer in the herd unit and prefer the same or more conservative season in 2013.
- Pumpkin Buttes Herd Unit is below objective. Landowners generally want the same or more conservative season for 2013.
- Black Hills Herd Unit is under objective. The Sheridan Region portion of the herd unit shows landowners indicating that the herd is at or below desired levels for mule deer. Most want to see the same or more conservative season in 2013.
- Cheyenne River Deer herd unit is below objective. The Sheridan Region portion of the herd unit shows landowners indicating that the herd at or below desired levels and favor the same or more conservative seasons for 2013.

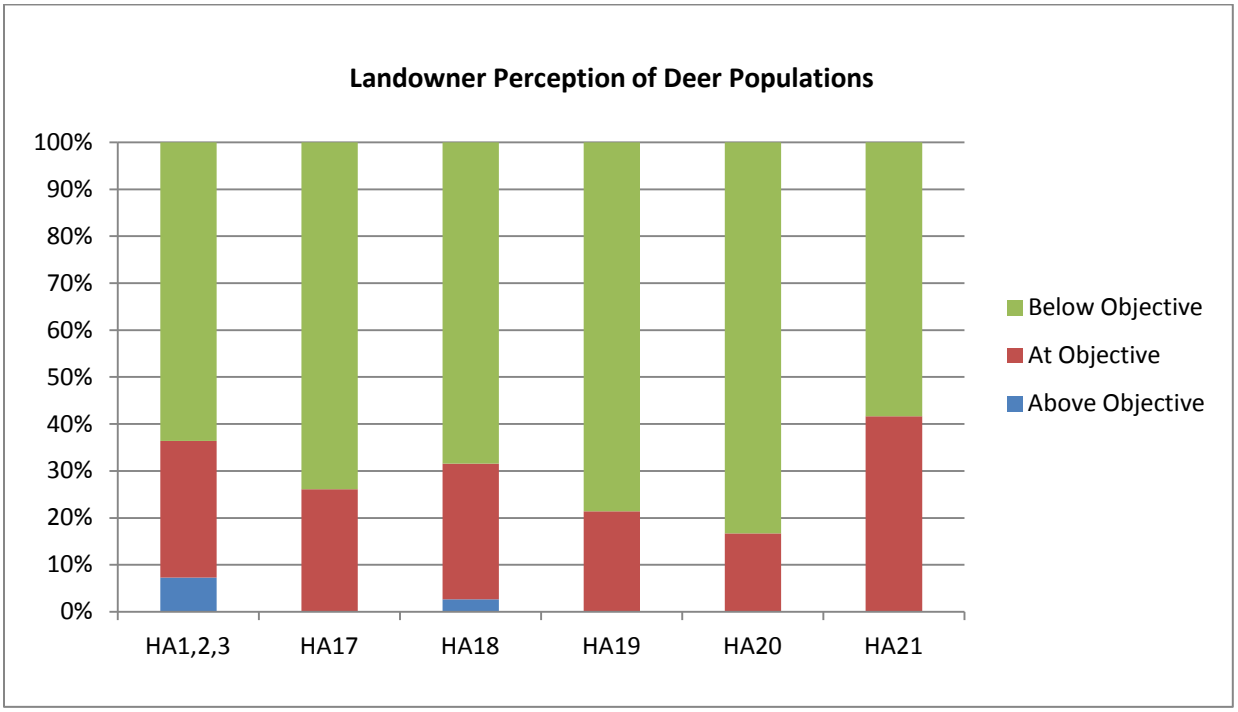


Figure 3. 2012 landowner survey results by herd unit regarding deer herd size compared to herd objective

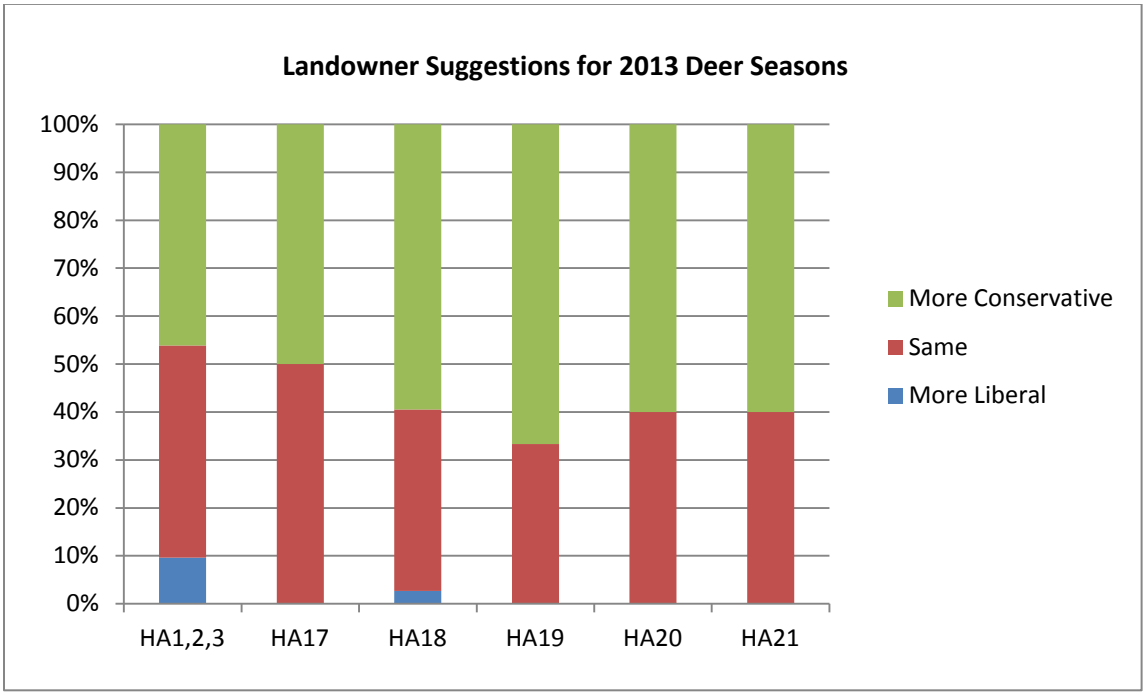


Figure 4. 2012 landowner survey results by herd unit regarding desired 2013 deer hunting seasons.

Table 2. Summary of responses by landowners regarding deer population levels and opinions for deer hunting seasons 1997– 2012.

	Population			Season		
Hunt Area	**Below Desired Level**	**At Desired Level**	**Above Desired Level**	**More Conserv Season**	**Same Season**	**More Liberal Season**
1	25	10	2	17	16	2
3	6	3	0	4	5	0
8	1	1	0	1	1	0
10	0	2	0	0	2	0
17	17	6	0	11	11	0
18	26	11	1	22	14	1
19	11	3	0	10	5	0
20	5	1	0	3	2	0
21	7	5	0	6	4	0
22	3	1	1	3	1	1
26	0	0	0	0	0	0
YEAR						
***2012**	106(66%)	46(29%)	8(5%)	80(52%)	65(42%)	8(5%)
2011	52 (71%)	20 (28%)	1 (1%)	41 (59%)	27 (39%)	1 (1%)
2010	56 (57%)	38 (39%)	4 (4%)	40 (51%)	49 (41%)	8 (8%)
2009	64 (57%)	43 (38%)	5 (4%)	50 (45%)	58 (52%)	6 (5%)
2008	28 (26%)	72 (67%)	7 (7%)	17 (16%)	78 (72%)	13 (12%)
2007	22 (18%)	83 (66%)	20 (16%)	13 (10%)	88 (70%)	24 (19%)
2006	24 (18%)	75 (57%)	32 (24%)	14 (11%)	77 (58%)	41 (31%)
2005	18 (19%)	54 (56%)	25 (26%)	14 (14%)	60 (61%)	25 (25%)
2004	52 (29%)	98 (55%)	29 (16%)	30 (17%)	117 (67%)	29 (16%)
2003	57 (30%)	110 (58%)	23 (12%)	34 (19%)	108 (61%)	35 (20%)
2002	43 (32%)	76 (56%)	17 (13%)	30 (22%)	84 (62%)	22 (16%)
2001	44 (35%)	65 (52%)	17 (13%)	34 (27%)	74 (59%)	18 (14%)
2000	38 (29%)	73 (57%)	18 (14%)	34 (26%)	66 (51%)	30 (23%)
1999	30 (29%)	56 (55%)	16 (16 %)	26 (25%)	56 (55%)	20 (20%)
1998	60 (47%)	63 (49%)	6 (5%)	51 (39%)	65 (50%)	15 (11%)
1997	64 (47%)	56 (41%)	16 (12%)	57 (42%)	61 (45%)	18 (13%)

*Note-Totals of Hunt Area may not equal total for 2012. This is due to some landowners not reporting what area they are in. They're opinions were factored into the total, but not by Hunt Area.

APPENDIX C

2012 Buffalo/Kaycee Landowner Survey

April 10, 2013

Prepared by Dan Thiele

Buffalo Wildlife Biologist
Wyoming Game & Fish Department

The 14th Buffalo/Kaycee landowner postseason survey was conducted following the 2012 hunting season. About 150 landowners were queried on their perceptions of antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer and elk populations as well as what hunting season adjustments they recommend for the 2013 hunting seasons. The survey was mailed along with a landowner coupon form and information on submitting landowner coupons for reimbursement. Landowners were asked the following questions for each species that occupies their ranches (antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer, and elk):

Overall for your area, is the (*species*) population:
- Below or less than desired levels
- At or about right at desired levels
- Above or higher than desired levels

For next year, would you like to see the (*species*) hunting seasons:
- More conservative with fewer licenses
- About the same as this year
- More liberal with more licenses

Beginning in 2005, landowners were also asked if they were willing to provide free access for doe/fawn antelope and/or deer hunting. General comments were also requested.

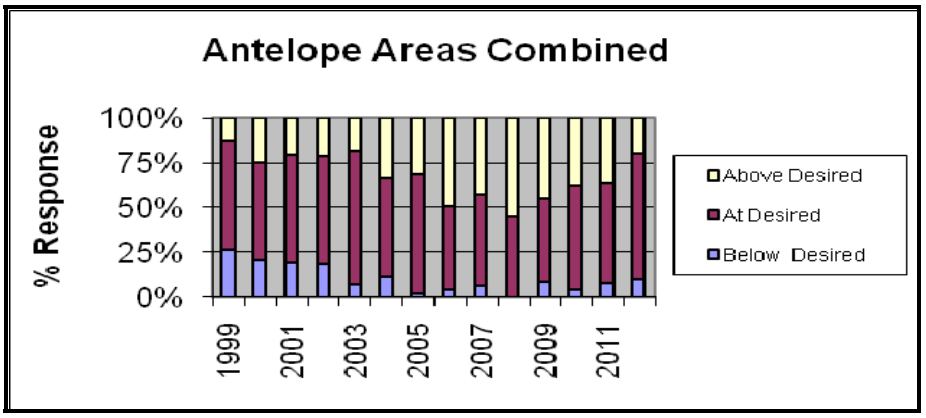
Sixty responses were received for a response rate of 40%. This compares to 47% in 2011 and 46% in 2009 and 2010. Results of the 2012 survey and 14-year trends are provided below. Not all landowners responded to each question or for each species. Some landowners are credited with a response in more than one hunt area because of landownership patterns. Therefore, total responses may exceed the number of actual survey returns. The total (*n*) references the number of landowners who responded for the respective species followed by the totals for all hunt areas. Samples are generally low at the hunt area level limiting the confidence in the results.

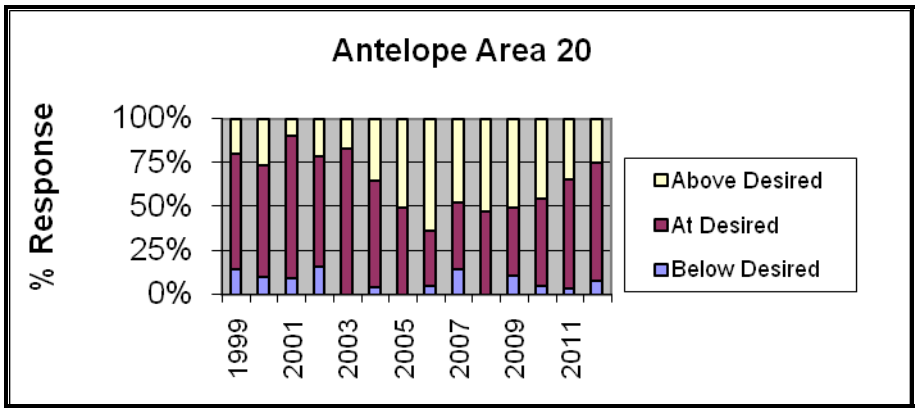
Some interpretation of survey responses was needed as some landowners responded for species they do not have, or, have limited numbers of. For example, a landowner who has low potential for antelope on a ranch and responded they are below desired numbers was not included in the final results.

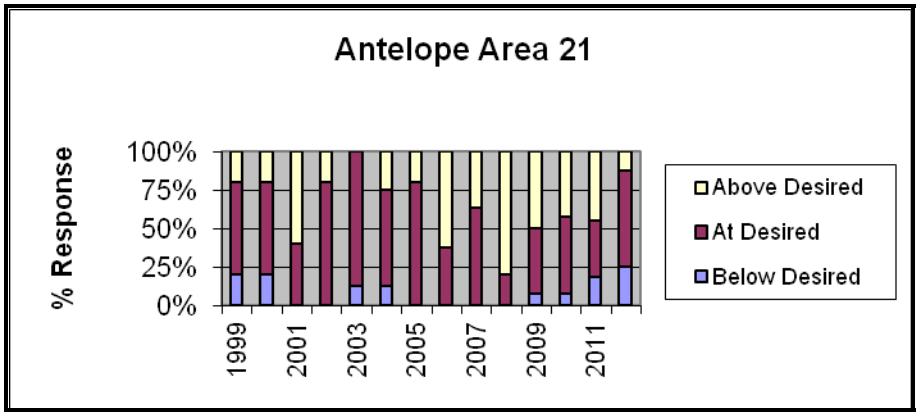
Combining all hunt area responses by species indicates that landowners believe antelope numbers have decreased over the last four years. Reponses for mule deer suggest the decline in deer numbers may have moderated the last two years. The 2010 results showed the lowest percentage of landowners reporting too many deer and the highest percentage reporting too few deer. Conversely, 2010 had the highest percentage of landowners responding that white-tailed deer numbers are too high (74%). Responses the last two years suggest numbers may be decreasing. The combined hunt areas response for elk indicates that numbers have increased the last two years, although 60% of landowners are satisfied with current numbers. A number of factors can influence landowner responses including population size, annual precipitation and depredation problems.

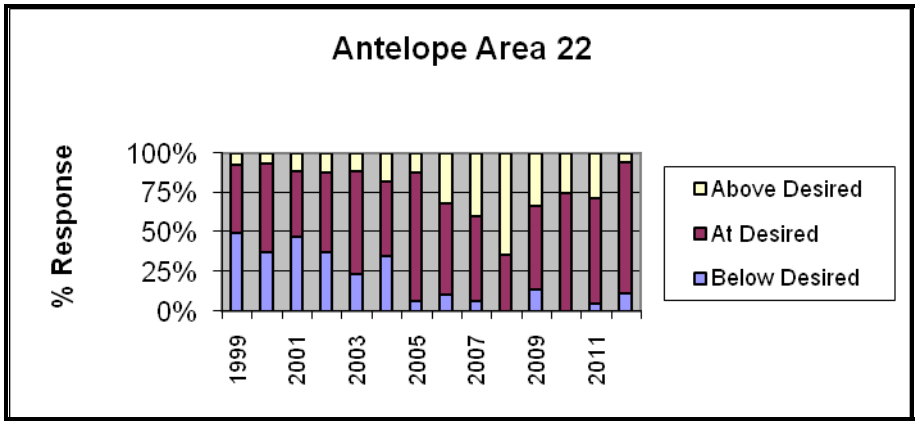
Eight landowners responded they would accept doe/fawn hunters free of charge for one or more species.

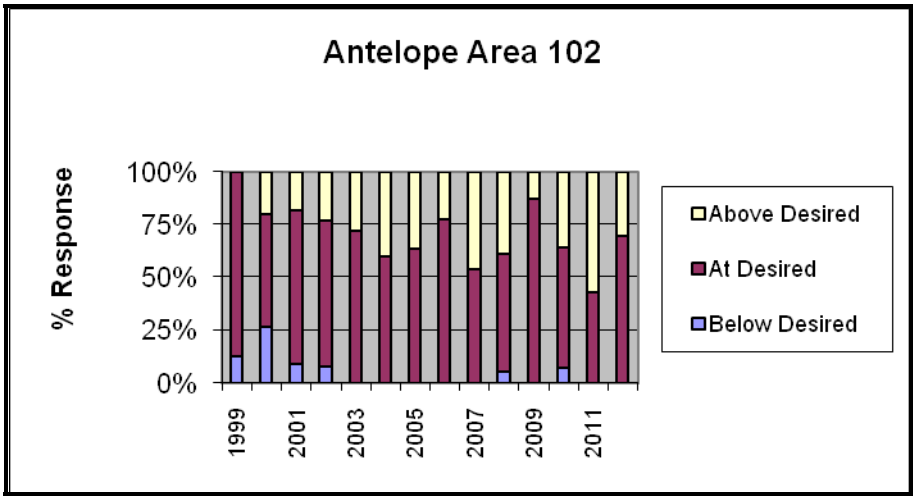
Antelope	Population			Seasons		
Hunt Area	Below Desired Levels	At Desired Levels	Above Desired Levels	More Conserv Seasons	Same Seasons	More Liberal Seasons
20	2	16	6	2	17	5
21	2	5	1	2	3	2
22	2	14	1	2	14	1
102	0	7	3	0	8	2
113	0	3	2	0	3	2
TOTAL (n=56)	6 (10%)	45 (71%)	12 (19%)	6 (10%)	45 (71%)	12 (19%)
2011 (n=65)	6 (8%)	42 (55%)	28 (37%)	5 (7%)	51 (67%)	20 (26%)
2010 (n=60)	3 (4%)	46 (61%)	27 (35%)	3 (4%)	55 (74%)	16 (22%)
2009 (n=66)	6 (8%)	35 (47%)	34 (45%)	4 (5%)	44 (59%)	27 (36%)
2008 (n=62)	1 (1%)	30 (44%)	38 (55%)	1 (2%)	39 (58%)	27 (40%)
2007 (n=61)	4 (6%)	33 (51%)	28 (43%)	4 (6%)	39 (60%)	22 (34%)
2006 (n=60)	3 (4%)	32 (47%)	34 (49%)	3 (4%)	39 (57%)	27 (39%)
2005 (n=52)	1 (2%)	38 (67%)	18 (32%)	0 (0%)	42 (75%)	14 (25%)
2004 (n=61)	8 (11%)	39 (55%)	24 (34%)	8 (11%)	39 (56%)	23 (33%)
2003 (n=65)	5 (7%)	53 (75%)	13 (18%)	7 (10%)	52 (74%)	11 (16%)
2002 (n=59)	11 (18%)	36 (60%)	13 (22%)	9 (15%)	40 (68%)	10 (17%)
2001 (n=52)	11 (19%)	35 (60%)	12 (21%)	9 (16%)	42 (75%)	5 (9%)
2000 (n=59)	13 (21%)	34 (54%)	16 (25%)	9 (14%)	39 (62%)	15 (24%)
1999 (n=46)	14 (27%)	32 (60%)	7 (13%)	13 (25%)	36 (69%)	3 (6%)

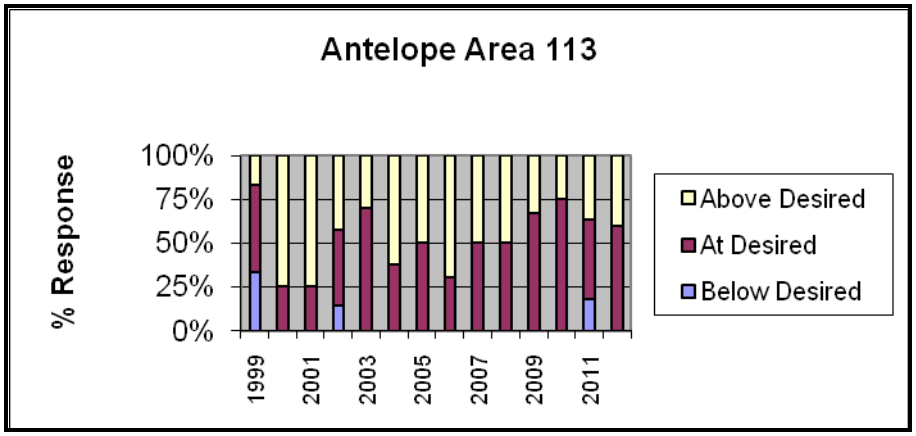




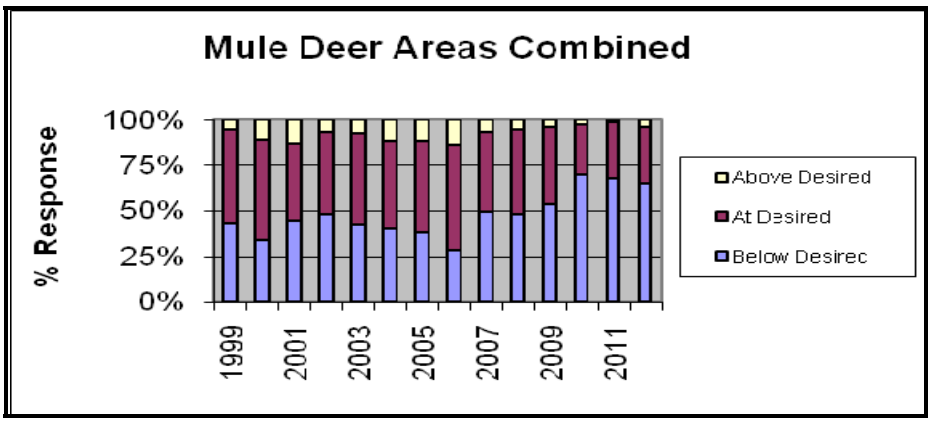

Antelope Area 21
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

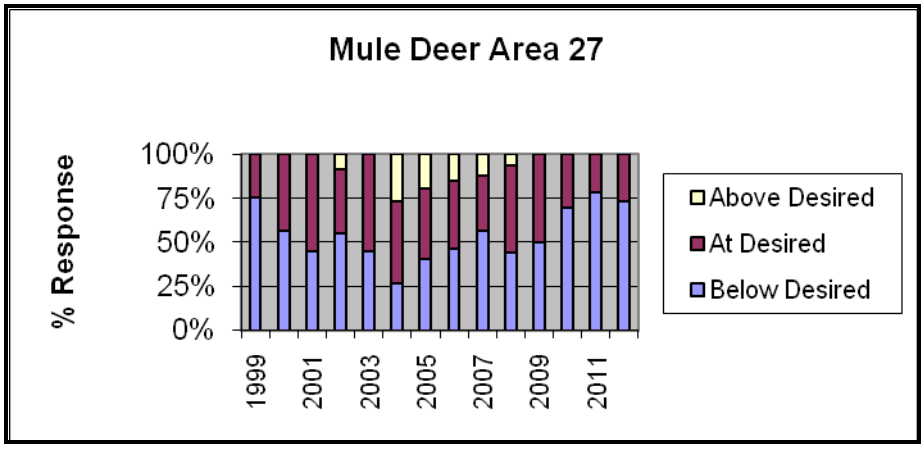

Antelope Area 22
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

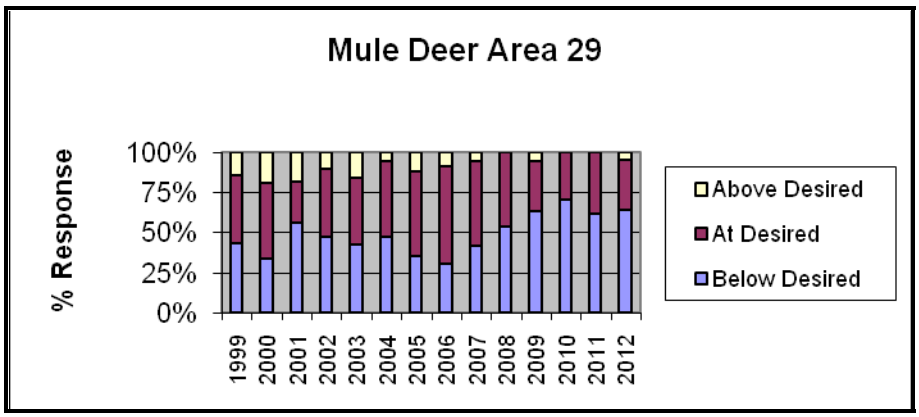

Antelope Area 102
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

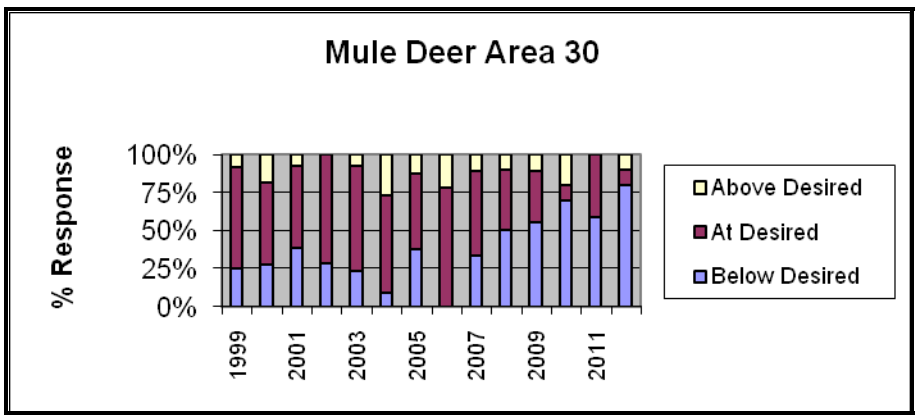


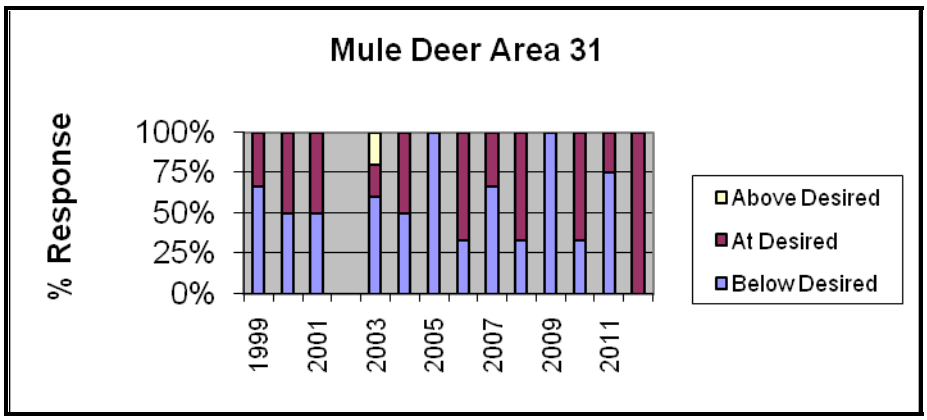
Mule Deer	Population			Seasons		
Hunt Area	Below Desired Levels	At Desired Levels	Above Desired Levels	More Conserv Seasons	Same Seasons	More Liberal Seasons
27	8	3	0	6	4	0
29	14	7	1	8	8	1
30	8	1	1	4	5	1
31	0	2	0	1	1	0
32	2	2	0	2	2	0
33	14	6	1	9	10	2
163	0	1	0	0	1	0
169	2	1	0	0	2	0
TOTAL (n=55)	48 (65%)	23 (31%)	3 (4%)	30 (45%)	33 (49%)	4 (6%)
2011 (n=66)	54 (68%)	25 (31%)	1 (1%)	48 (64%)	25 (33%)	2 (3%)
2010 (n=61)	51 (70%)	20 (27%)	2 (3%)	30 (44%)	37 (54%)	1 (2%)
2009 (n=64)	41 (53%)	33 (43%)	3 (4%)	21 (30%)	42 (61%)	6 (9%)
2008 (n=62)	33 (48%)	32(46%)	4 (6%)	17 (25%)	47 (69%)	4 (6%)
2007 (n=62)	34 (49%)	30 (44%)	5 (7%)	26 (39%)	33 (50%)	7 (11%)
2006 (n=59)	20 (28%)	42 (58%)	10 (14%)	15 (22%)	45 (64%)	10 (14%)
2005 (n=50)	22 (38%)	29 (50%)	7 (12%)	16 (32%)	34 (68%)	5 (10%)
2004 (n=64)	30 (40%)	36 (48%)	9 (12%)	21 (31%)	36 (52%)	12 (17%)
2003 (n=66)	33 (42%)	40 (51%)	6 (7%)	23 (29%)	46 (59%)	9 (12%)
2002 (n=69)	34 (48%)	32 (45%)	5 (7%)	24 (34%)	45 (63%)	2 (3%)
2001 (n=52)	27 (44%)	26 (43%)	8 (13%)	17 (29%)	37 (63%)	5 (8%)
2000 (n=63)	24 (34%)	39 (55%)	8 (11%)	19 (27%)	40 (56%)	12 (17%)
1999 (n=47)	23 (43%)	28 (52%)	3 (5%)	18 (32%)	34 (61%)	4 (7%)

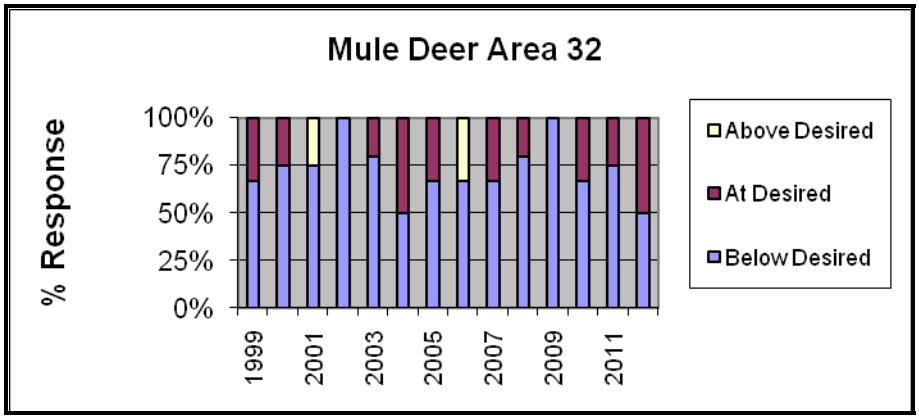


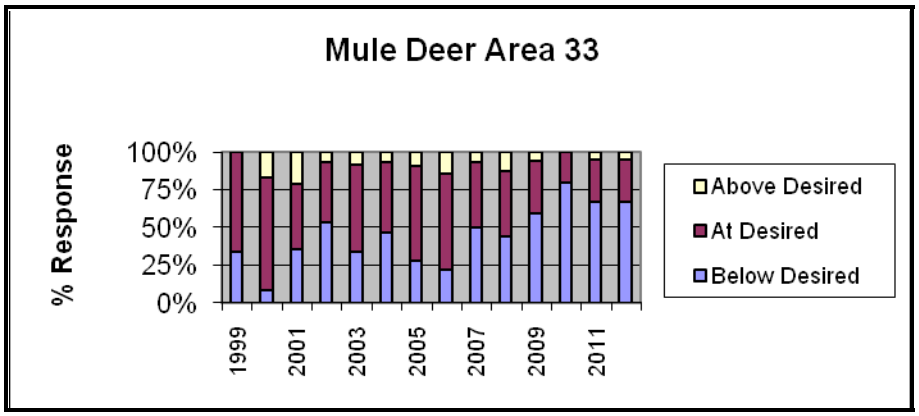

Mule Deer Area 27
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

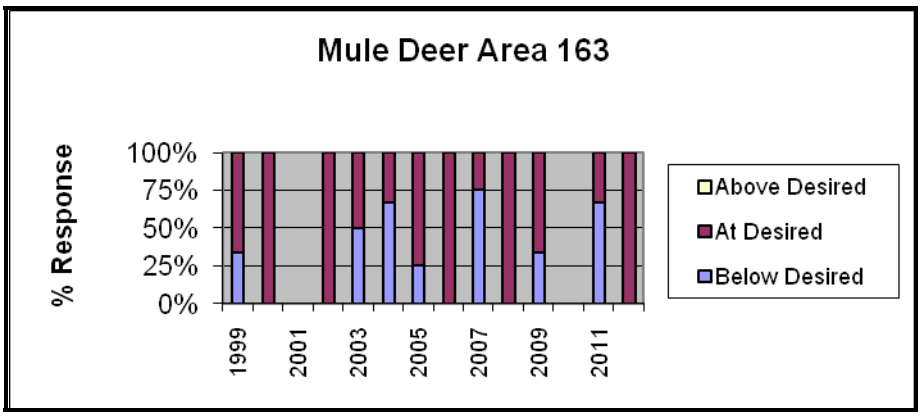

Mule Deer Area 29
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

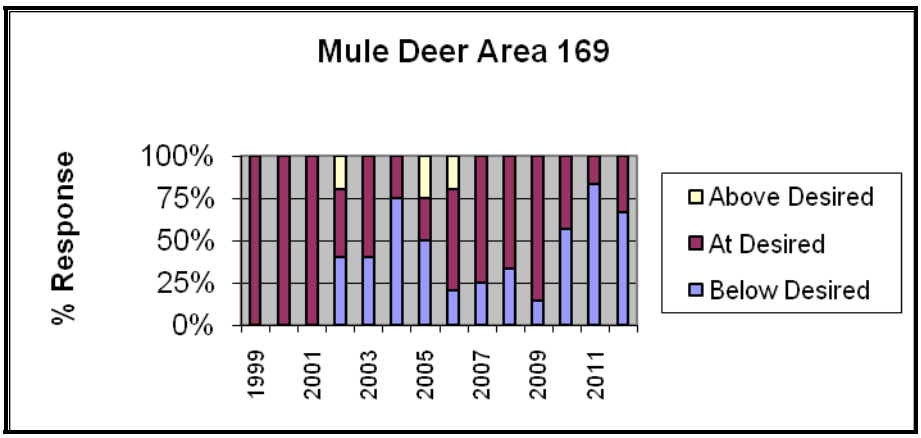

Mule Deer Area 30
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired


Mule Deer Area 31
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

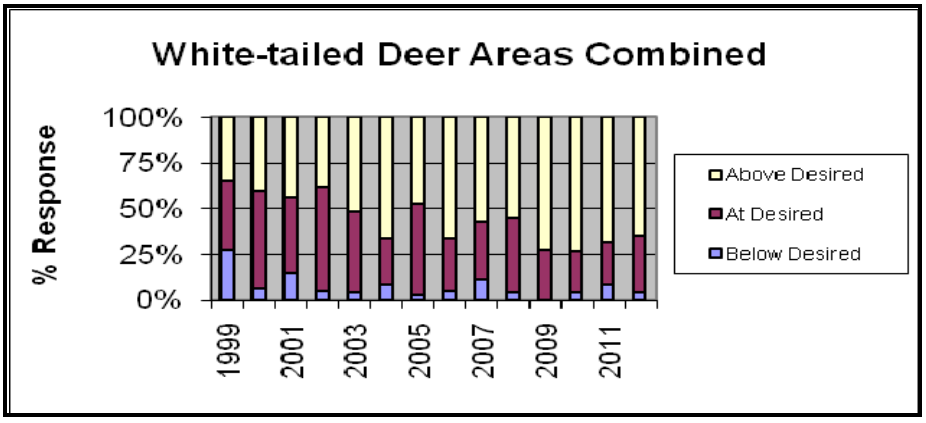

Mule Deer Area 32
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

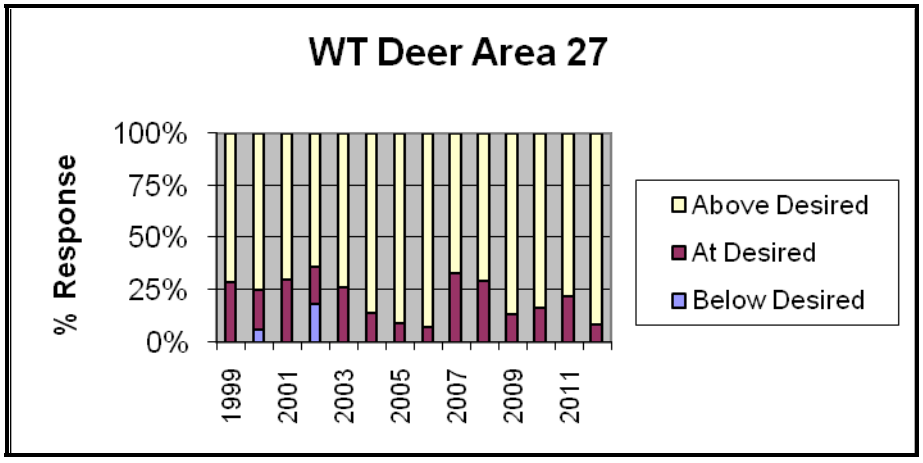

Mule Deer Area 33
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

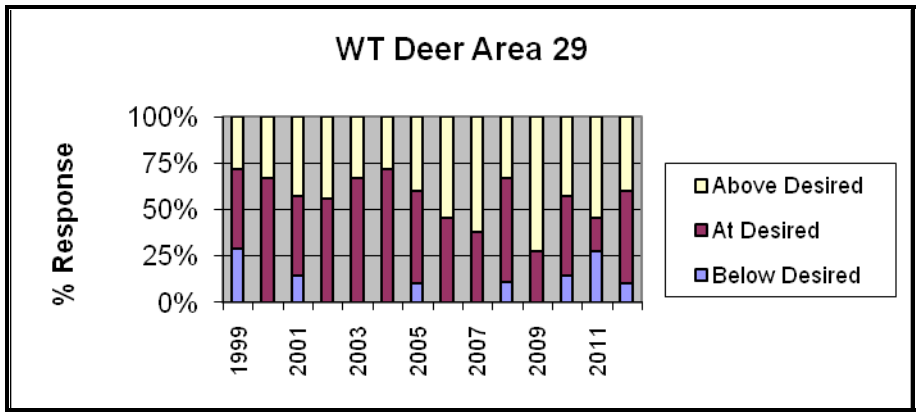

Mule Deer Area 163
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

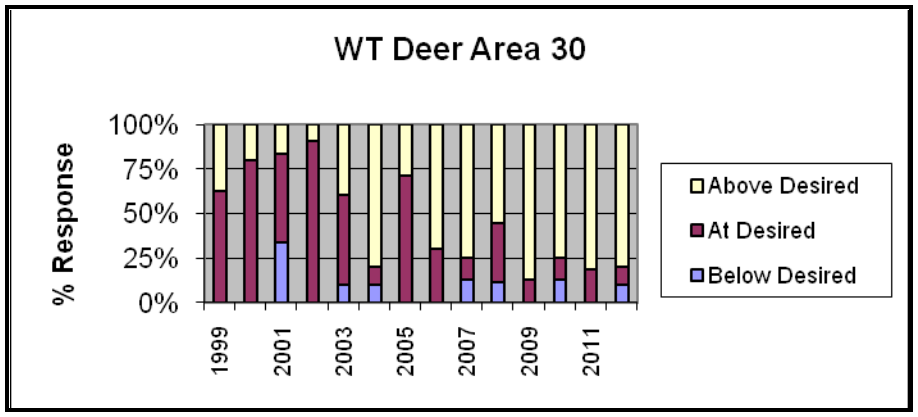

Mule Deer Area 169
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

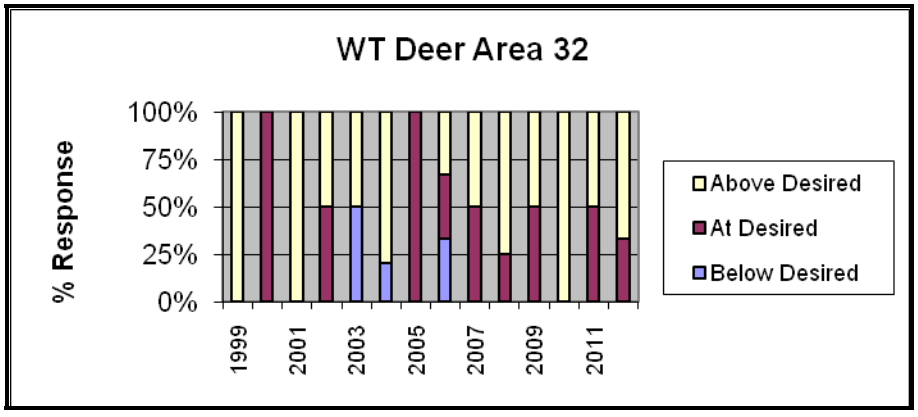
WT Deer	Population			Seasons		
Hunt Area	Below Desired Levels	At Desired Levels	Above Desired Levels	More Conserv Seasons	Same Seasons	More Liberal Seasons
27	0	1	11	0	4	8
29	1	5	4	1	6	3
30	1	1	8	1	5	4
31	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	0	1	2	0	1	2
33	0	5	7	0	8	4
163	0	1	0	0	1	0
169	0	1	0	0	1	0
TOTAL (n=45)	2 (4%)	15 (31%)	32 (65%)	2 (4%)	26 (53%)	21 (43%)
2011 (n=47)	4 (8%)	11 (23%)	33 (69%)	4 (9%)	18 (39%)	24 (52%)
2010 (n=43)	2 (4%)	10 (22%)	34 (74%)	1 (2%)	20 (47%)	22 (51%)
2009 (n=49)	0 (0%)	14 (27%)	37 (73%)	0 (0%)	16 (33%)	32 (67%)
2008 (n=49)	2 (4%)	22 (41%)	30 (55%)	1 (2%)	27 (50%)	26 (48%)
2007 (n=50)	5 (11%)	14 (31%)	26 (58%)	2 (5%)	18 (44%)	21 (51%)
2006 (n=48)	2 (4%)	13 (29%)	30 (67%)	2 (4%)	17 (39%)	25 (57%)
2005 (n=37)	1 (2%)	20 (50%)	19 (48%)	1 (2%)	20 (50%)	19 (48%)
2004 (n=46)	4 (8%)	12 (25%)	32 (67%)	4 (9%)	13 (28%)	30 (64%)
2003 (n=47)	2 (4%)	21 (44%)	25 (52%)	3 (6%)	19 (40%)	26 (54%)
2002 (n=43)	2 (4%)	25 (57%)	17 (39%)	4 (9%)	26 (59%)	14 (32%)
2001 (n=41)	6 (15%)	17 (41%)	18 (44%)	5 (13%)	17 (43%)	18 (45%)
2000 (n=45)	3 (6%)	25 (53%)	19 (41%)	2 (4%)	28 (60%)	17 (36%)
1999 (n=41)	10 (27%)	14 (38%)	13 (35%)	4 (11%)	22 (59%)	11 (30%)

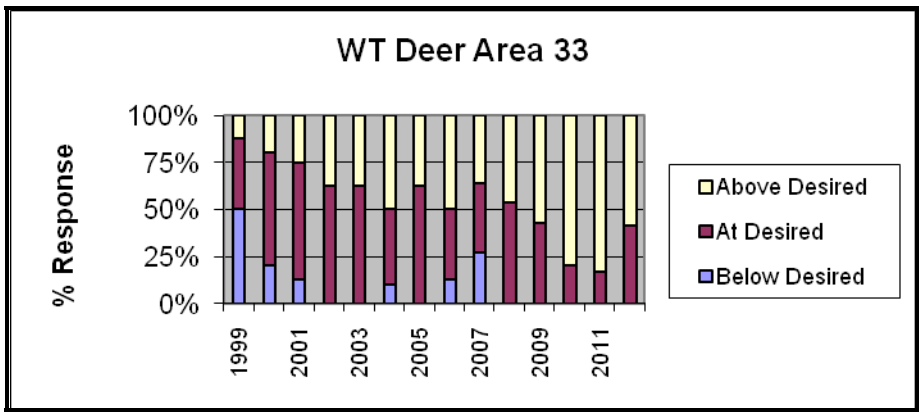




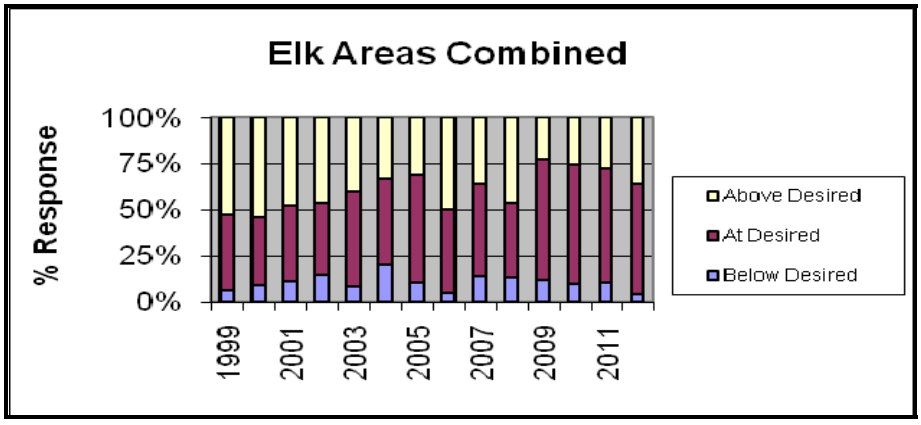

WT Deer Area 29
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

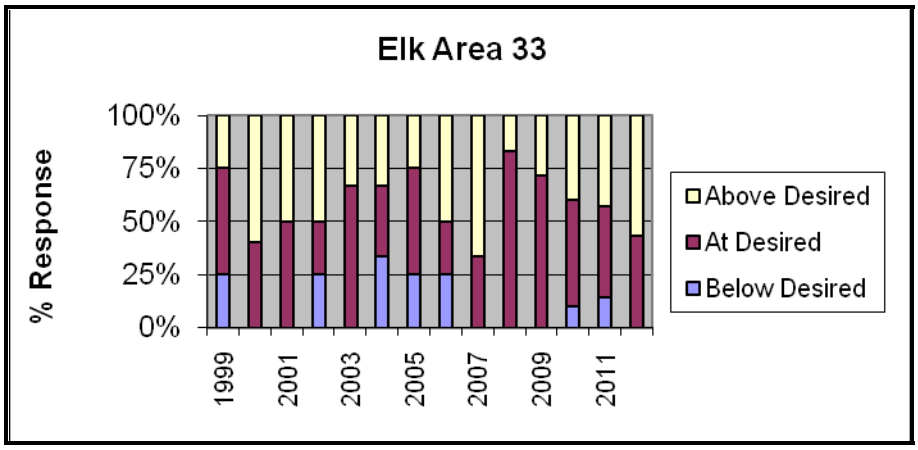

WT Deer Area 30
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

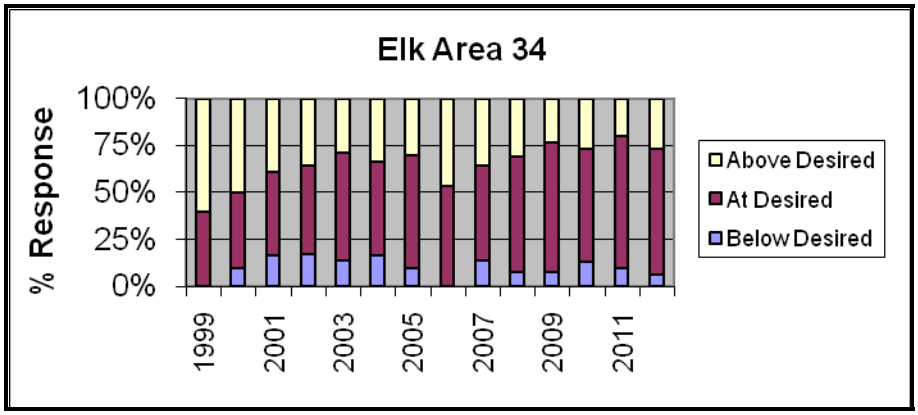

WT Deer Area 32
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

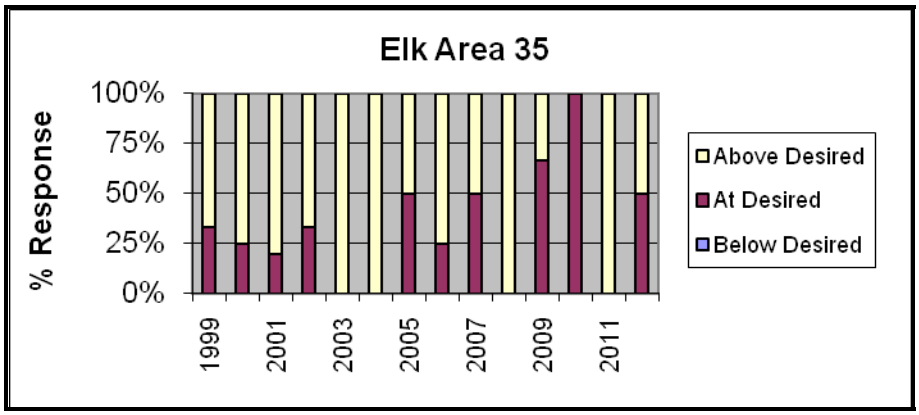

WT Deer Area 33
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

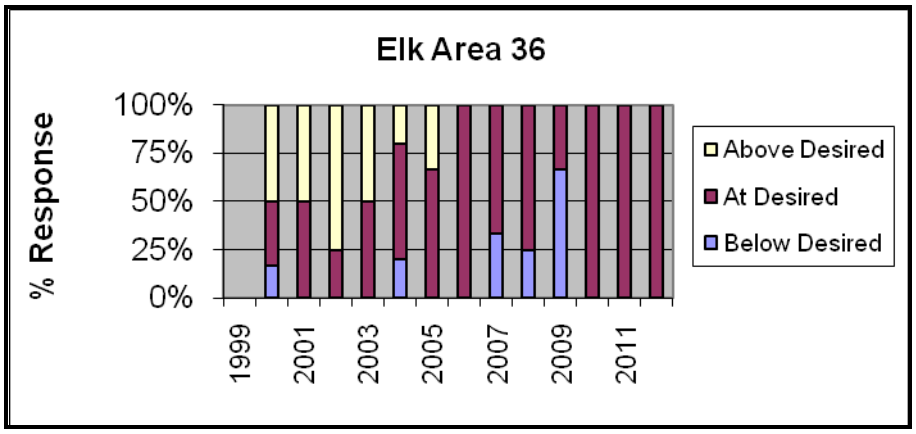
Elk	Population			Seasons		
Hunt Area	Below Desired Levels	At Desired Levels	Above Desired Levels	More Conserv Seasons	Same Seasons	More Liberal Seasons
33	0	3	4	0	5	2
34	1	10	4	1	11	2
35	0	1	1	0	1	1
36	0	1	0	0	1	0
TOTAL (n=23)	1 (4%)	15 (60%)	9 (36%)	1 (4%)	18 (75%)	5 (21%)
2011 (n=31)	3 (10%)	18 (62%)	8 (28%)	2 (7%)	21 (72%)	6 (21%)
2010 (n=30)	3 (10%)	20 (64%)	8 (26%)	3 (10%)	22 (73%)	5 (17%)
2009 (n=30)	3 (12%)	17 (65%)	6 (23%)	1 (4%)	19 (73%)	6 (23%)
2008 (n=25)	2 (8%)	16 (64%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	19 (76%)	6 (24%)
2007 (n=22)	3 (14%)	11 (50%)	8 (36%)	5 (24%)	8 (38%)	8 (38%)
2006 (n=22)	1 (5%)	10 (45%)	11 (50%)	2 (9%)	13 (59%)	7 (32%)
2005 (n=19)	2 (10%)	11 (58%)	6 (32%)	1 (5%)	15 (79%)	3 (16%)
2004 (n=30)	6 (20%)	14 (47%)	10 (33%)	3 (10%)	20 (69%)	6 (21%)
2003 (n=25)	2 (8%)	13 (52%)	10 (40%)	0 (0%)	14 (58%)	10 (42%)
2002 (n=28)	4 (14%)	11 (39%)	13 (47%)	6 (21%)	16 (57%)	6 (21%)
2001 (n=25)	3 (11%)	11 (41%)	13 (48%)	3 (11%)	16 (59%)	8 (30%)
2000 (n=33)	3 (9%)	13 (37%)	19 (54%)	3 (8%)	22 (61%)	11 (31%)
1999 (n=17)	1 (6%)	7 (41%)	9 (53%)	3 (18%)	11 (65%)	3 (18%)






Elk Area 34
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired


Elk Area 35
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired


Elk Area 36
% Response
100%
75%
50%
25%
0%
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
Above Desired
At Desired
Below Desired

APPENDIX D

Shrub Monitoring Results for the Sheridan Region

Shrub monitoring was again conducted during fall 2012 and spring 2013 in the Sheridan Region to provide baseline habitat trend data to increase the awareness of habitat condition/trend among wildlife biologists and game wardens as they manage wildlife populations. These surveys were designed to:

- Monitor "key" or "indicator" areas that appear to reflect what is occurring within the larger area and where the vegetation community may show reactions or changes to population management.

- Use vegetation and habitat trend data to assist with justification of season recommendations and population objectives.

- Increase awareness of wildlife biologists, game wardens and the public of annual vegetation condition and long-term trends.

- Keep the process relatively simple for annual monitoring and assessment and include a minimum of one transect for each warden district and two transects for each wildlife biologist district. Each transect should be visited twice each year with data collected in the fall and in the spring. Historical transect locations and coordination with other land management agencies should be considered.

- Vegetation monitoring priority is in sagebrush and sagebrush steppe communities, however, other shrub communities and other vegetation type communities will be monitored as identified by Regional personnel.

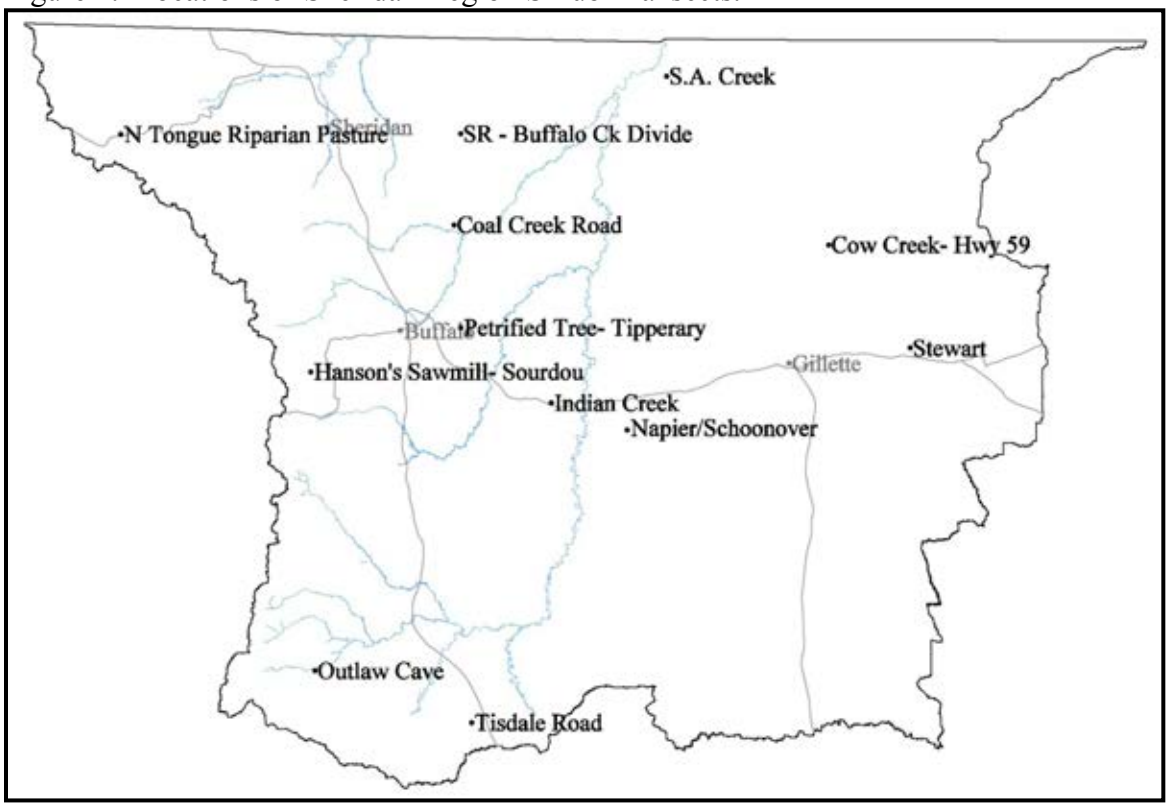
Basic data collection techniques are referenced in Appendix XIII of the Handbook of Biological Techniques, WGFD 1982, pages 360-420 and Handbook of Investigative Techniques, WGFD 1981. Minimum data collection requirements for the monitoring stations established regardless of vegetation community type or specific plant species include:

1. Measure annual production on a minimum of 5 leaders from at least 50 plants at paced intervals in late summer/fall after plant growth and prior to leaf drop or loss.
2. Measure annual utilization as number of leaders browsed from a minimum of 10 leaders from each of 50 plants at paced intervals collected in late winter or early spring prior to plant growth and after most animals have left the area.
3. Determine spring pellet group density from at least 10 circular 1/100 Ac plots.
4. Repeat photos (3 photos) collected in the spring and fall.
5. Nearby weather station summaries or on-site data if collected.

6. Permanent 4'x4' hog wire cage to show large ungulate non-use as compared to use areas.
7. Shrub/tree age class categories for a minimum of 50 plants collected in the fall.
8. Shrub/tree hedging class categories for a minimum of 50 plants collected in the fall.

Nine sagebrush transects and one curlleaf mountain mahogany transect were established at locations presented in Figure 1. In addition, willow transects were monitored for utilization in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service on the Bighorn National Forest.

Figure 1. Locations of Sheridan Region Shrub Transects.



Results (see Table 1) of the sagebrush monitoring showed that average leader production in 2012 was 2.17 cm (range 0.80 – 6.22 cm) compared to 4.03 cm (range 2.96 – 5.31 cm) recorded in 2011. The average stand age scored 2.19 indicating sagebrush was mature. The average hedging class score for all stands was 1.49 reflecting light to moderate hedging.

One curlleaf mountain mahogany stand was monitored near Outlaw Cave on the Middle Fork Powder River west of Kaycee. Monitoring indicated that average leader production in 2012 was 2.05 cm compared 2.47 cm in 2011. The stand age scored 2.20 indicating a mature stand. The average hedging class score was 1.68 reflecting light hedging. Spring

utilization monitoring in 2013 indicated that browsing was light with only 0.6% of the leaders browsed.

Overall the data demonstrates there are not overuse issues associated with big game at least where transects were established. This is encouraging considering pronghorn populations are high in some of these areas. In several recent years, winter weather conditions were mild allowing animals to remain dispersed with nearly all browse and other vegetation readily available. The winter of 2011-2012 was relatively mild without much persistent snow cover and relatively light use was observed on the three transects monitored in the spring of 2012. The summer of 2012 was dry in much of the region and less sagebrush leader growth was observed on all but one transect. The winter of 2012-2013 was again relatively mild throughout much of the region however the percent of leaders browsed increased on both sagebrush transects where utilization was measured in both the spring of 2012 and spring of 2013.

TABLE 1. Sheridan Shrub Transect Summaries

Transect	Fall 2011	Fall 2011	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Fall 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
	Average Leader Production (cm)	Average Stand Age	Average Hedging Score	Average Percent Leaders Browsed	Average Leader Production (cm)	Average Stand Age	Average Hedging Score	Average Percent Leaders Browsed
Coal Creek	---	---	---	---	1.53	2.52	1.20	---
Cow Creek	5.16	2.33	1.47	---	1.94	2.02	1.44	4.6
Indian Creek	3.00	2.16	1.71	3.6	1.23	2.02	1.22	10.6
Napier/Schoonover	2.96	2.11	1.08	---	1.34	2.00	2.00	16.2
Outlaw Cave	2.47	2.00	1.62	1.2	2.05	2.20	1.68	0.6
Petrified Tree	---	---	---	---	1.25	2.34	1.30	---
SA Creek	4.47	2.25	1.32	---	3.52	2.06	1.52	10.8
SR Buffalo Creek	---	---	---	---	1.68	2.34	1.62	6.6
Stewart	5.31	2.14	1.63	---	6.22	2.14	1.24	---
Tisdale	3.26	2.22	1.84	2.4	0.80	2.32	1.90	9.8

APPENDIX E

CAMPBELL COUNTY HUNTER ASSISTANCE SERVICE
2012 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Operations

2012 was the 29th year for the Campbell County Hunter Assistance Service (here after "the Service"). The program was started in 1983 as an effort to better coordinate private land availability with prospective hunters. The Service has since evolved to include both private land hunting coordination as well as public land hunting information.

In 2012, the Hunter Assistance Service was operated from the Campbell County Visitor's Center (here after "The Visitor's Center"), located at Highway 59 and Interstate 90. Prior to 2000, the Service was conducted at both the Visitor's Center and the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce in downtown Gillette. With a consolidated operation at one location, the Service is better able to maximize limited resources as well as provide better service to the hunting community, as all the information is located at one readily accessible and centrally located site.

During the past 13 years, the Service has also provided information for the Department's Walk-in Access areas. In 2000, a temporary position was funded by the Department to work at the Visitor's Center from late September through early November. A Game and Fish Department Access Yes grant was used from 2003-2009 to fund the position. The focus of this position was to promote Walk-in Access areas within Campbell County, distribute Walk-in Access guides, to contact landowners in the Gillette District to find those ranches seeking additional hunters, and to keep an active list of those ranches available at the Visitor's Center for hunters seeking hunting opportunities. In previous years, the temporary employee had spent considerable time contacting landowners to inquire about big game hunting opportunities on private land. Those with open dates to take additional hunters were kept on a calling list to be distributed to hunters seeking such opportunity. The hired employee also worked at the Visitor's Center during peak visitation periods, answering hunter questions and recommending appropriate departmental publications.

For the 2012 hunting season, coverage was provided by the Gillette Wildlife Biologist, the Sheridan Information and Education Specialist, and by employees of the Visitor's Center. It is hoped that this position will be refilled in future seasons when funding is available, as it is a valuable addition to the Hunter Assistance Service and provides the hunting public with additional information.

The Service has greatly expanded during the past few years to become more than just an opportunity to provide hunter assistance during the peak fall season. The Campbell County Visitor's Center now fields hunter inquiries year-round. The permanent staff at the Visitor's Center has become well-versed in hunting and fishing opportunities within the region and are able to provide this information to nonresident tourists and residents throughout the year. If unable to directly assist the public with hunting and fishing information, The Visitor's Center forwards requests to either local Department personnel or the Regional Office in Sheridan. The Department has benefited greatly from this added service. The number of Department customers the Visitor's Center has assisted points to the need for a permanent Game and Fish public office in Gillette, should funding become available.

Various Department publications were made available for free distribution during service operations. Of particular importance for Campbell County was the availability of the Department's Walk-in Hunting guide, since there are lands available in Campbell County for big game hunting under the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program. The Visitor's Center effort to maintain and distribute Walk-in Hunting guides was very well received from the hunting community. Other popular publications included hunting regulations, fishing guides, and various specialty publications of the Department.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land status maps (1:100,000) have been available at the Visitor's Center for the past six years for resale to the hunting public. Sportsmen were assisted with understanding these maps by using a map display of Northeast Wyoming, which included marked public access roads. The display maps were updated to show changes in land ownership due to sales of state lands and exchanges of USFS and BLM lands. Display maps were located both inside the Visitor's Center office and outside the building. Specific information on public lands hunting, map reading, and hunter ethics was also posted to the outside wall. The availability of critical hunting information along the outside wall of the Visitor's Center provided full-time support to the hunting community, even when the Visitor's Center was closed. The "big map" has become a popular stop for non-resident hunters. Hunters can update their own field maps and ask questions of WGFD and Visitor's Center staff before going into the field, and have mentioned that they appreciate and enjoy the service. Hunters also mention that they are very pleased with the "one-stop shopping" opportunity they have to purchase maps, reference the large map, and pick up regulations, and have their questions addressed at the Visitor's Center.

Results and Discussion

Personnel focused on fielding questions from the multitude of hunters that stopped in at the Visitor's Center and educating sportspersons about available public land and Walk-in hunting opportunities.

Visitor's Center personnel were very good in documenting hunter participation with the Hunter Assistance Service. During peak visitation periods when there were typically 10 to 20 hunters at the Visitor's Center at one time, it could be challenging to document detailed visitation information. Hunter information posted outside of the building meant that many hunters were never directly contacted by the Visitor's Center staff inside. Self-service information was very good for the customers, but the approach does not lend itself well to documenting actual total visitation and assistance provided. Additionally, some hunters were seen using the outside map and services during times when the Visitor's Center was closed. Overall, the Visitor's Center personnel did a commendable job in sampling the visiting hunter population; however the total numbers reported are recognized as being less than the actual total number of hunters using the Service in past years, due to the staffing limitations.

The recorded visitation in 2012 totaled approximately 853 hunters (Table 1). This number includes hunters that visited the Campbell County Visitor's Center in Wright – which may in the future require Department personnel to help field questions there as well. This total is likely lower than the actual total of visiting hunters, as some individuals that visited during September were not tallied by Visitor's Center staff and for reasons mentioned in the previous paragraph. It is conservatively estimated that at least 1,000 hunters actually used the Hunter Assistance Service in some fashion during the 2012 season.

Table 1. Gillette Hunter Assistance Service summary from 1984 to 2012.

Year	Landowners	Total Hunters
1984	45	741
1985	36	554
1986	24	923
1987	24	1,131
1988	22	737
1989	28	501
1990	28	236
1991	43	442
1992	46	695
1993	31	727
1994	24	681
1995	33	701
1996	28	651
1997	19	626
1998	27	573
1999	19	620
2000	29	1,776
2001	22	1,316
2002	17	1,346
2003	29	1,237
2004	35	1,711
2005	18	845
2006	12	481
2007	17	1,034
2008	12	922
2009	10	600
2010	0	1,007
2011	0	903
2012	0	853

Peak visitation tends to occur just prior to the start of the rifle season and remains high following the October 1st season opener for about 3 to 7 days. Many nonresident hunters feel that they must hunt the opening days of a season despite efforts to inform them that such a strategy is not necessary for a successful Wyoming hunt. The Gillette Wildlife Biologist was present at the Visitor's Center for three days prior to opening day and fielded the majority of hunting questions. The Sheridan Information and Education Specialist was also present on two days to assist. During the later parts of the season, the Gillette Wildlife Biologist would stop in as time permitted to help field questions. Both the North Gillette and South Gillette Game wardens stopped in when they were available. If staff members were unable to answer a question for a visiting hunter, they would either contact the Wildlife Biologist via cell phone or would contact the Sheridan Regional Office for assistance. The employees of the Visitor's Center did a commendable job in answering hunting questions this past year.

On several occasions, the Visitor's Center staff opened on weekend days following the opening of deer and antelope season in Campbell County, when typically the Visitor's Center is closed. Many hunters expressed their appreciation that the Hunter Assistance Service was staffed and available on weekends in these instances. Later in October, an additional surge of hunter visits occurred, as inquiries about elk hunting opportunities within the area increased.

The Hunter Assistance Service distributed many Walk-in Access booklets this season, as was the case in previous years. Sales of BLM Surface Management Maps were also extremely popular. Many non-residents read about the Service via the Campbell County Hunting Guide – a mini magazine distributed by The Gillette News-Record in collaboration with Wyoming Game and Fish. The magazine is mailed annually to non-residents who draw an antelope license in Campbell County. It offers several news articles regarding the area's hunting program and encourages use of the Hunter Assistance Service. Signs directing hunters to the Visitor's Center were placed along Interstate 90 to help hunters find the Service.

Recommendations for the 2013 Hunter Assistance Service

Overall, the 2012 Hunter Assistance Service accomplished the goals set in 2011. Operations ran efficiently and effectively as many sportsmen were greatly benefited by the Service. However, without a temporary employee to assist with contacting landowners, hunters were at a disadvantage this year when trying to find last-minute private land hunting opportunities. The following recommendations are offered to further refine and improve operations:

1. Reinstate the Access Yes grant to allow funding of a temporary position to assist with the Service. Time should be spent by this employee prior to the season contacting landowners to generate the initial hunting lists and re-doing maps as needed. Following the opening of local hunting seasons, time should also be dedicated to data summaries and report preparation. Clearly this project has proven to be of great benefit to the Department since there is no Game and Fish public office in Campbell County. The Visitor's Center may request some form of compensation from the Department in future years now that it is under new management, considering the time spent by permanent staff, use of the facilities, and the savings provided to Department personnel time.

2. Department staffing by local permanent personnel is still needed early in the season to help train temporary and Visitor's Center personnel. The presence of personnel helps greatly with answering hunter questions, as the beginning of the hunting seasons is the most congested time for the Visitor's Center. The addition of a Sheridan WGFD staff member the weekend prior to opening day and over the first week of October is a great benefit and provides faster service to hunters with questions that Visitor's Center staff may not be capable of answering.

3. Continue the sale of BLM and USFS maps at the Visitor's Center. The availability of maps is well-received by hunters, and they consistently comment that they appreciate it each year. Providing maps for sale at the Visitor's Center should be a top priority, so that hunters do not need to leave and return again with their questions.

4. It is recommended that the Point-of-Sale (IPOS) license technology be included as a resource for hunters at the Visitor's Center. Sale of leftover licenses was very popular when it was offered in 2005 at the Visitor's Center, and hunters who used this opportunity in 2005 mentioned that they appreciated the service and would like to see it

offered again. Other hunters who were visiting the Service for the first time in 2012 inquired about whether they could purchase leftover licenses at the Visitor's Center, along with their maps and other WGFD hunting documents. Offering improved "one stop shopping" rather than having to redirect hunters to a local license agent would greatly improve the efficiency of Hunter Assistance Service as a whole and would likely be very popular with visiting hunters.

5. The Department should continue to assist the Gillette News-Record with publishing the hunter information newsletter in 2013. These efforts greatly contribute to the effectiveness of the program and give hunters a head start by answering many common questions within the publication.

6. Update the display maps with new BLM maps as the maps become available. New BLM maps for the Campbell County area are in the process of being published and new sets should be available. The new maps will include land ownership changes that are currently marked by hand on display maps. A new display map should be made at least every other year, as older maps become weathered and faded, and land exchanges need to be updated.

7. Disseminate information about the Hunter Assistance Center to landowners as much as possible prior to the 2013 hunting season. It has been noted that many local ranchers were unaware of the service, and it is not possible for the temporary staff of the Visitor's Center to contact all of the 500+ landowners in the region. Using direct letters or newsletters distributed to ranchers by the USDA and NRCS will facilitate communication and information between ranchers and the Department. The result will hopefully be an increase in participation by landowners in the Hunter Assistance Service program.

8. Expand the availability of similar services to the towns of Sundance and Buffalo. Work with PLPW staff to set up large maps and public displays at accessible points in both Sundance and Buffalo. Staffing may not be immediately possible at these locations, but many questions can be answered with public displays that hunters can visit on their own. Consider working with USFS - Thunder Basin National Grasslands personnel to revamp the kiosk at Weston. The kiosk could be redone prior to hunting seasons to provide additional hunting information to those that hunt public lands in the Weston/Spring Creek area.

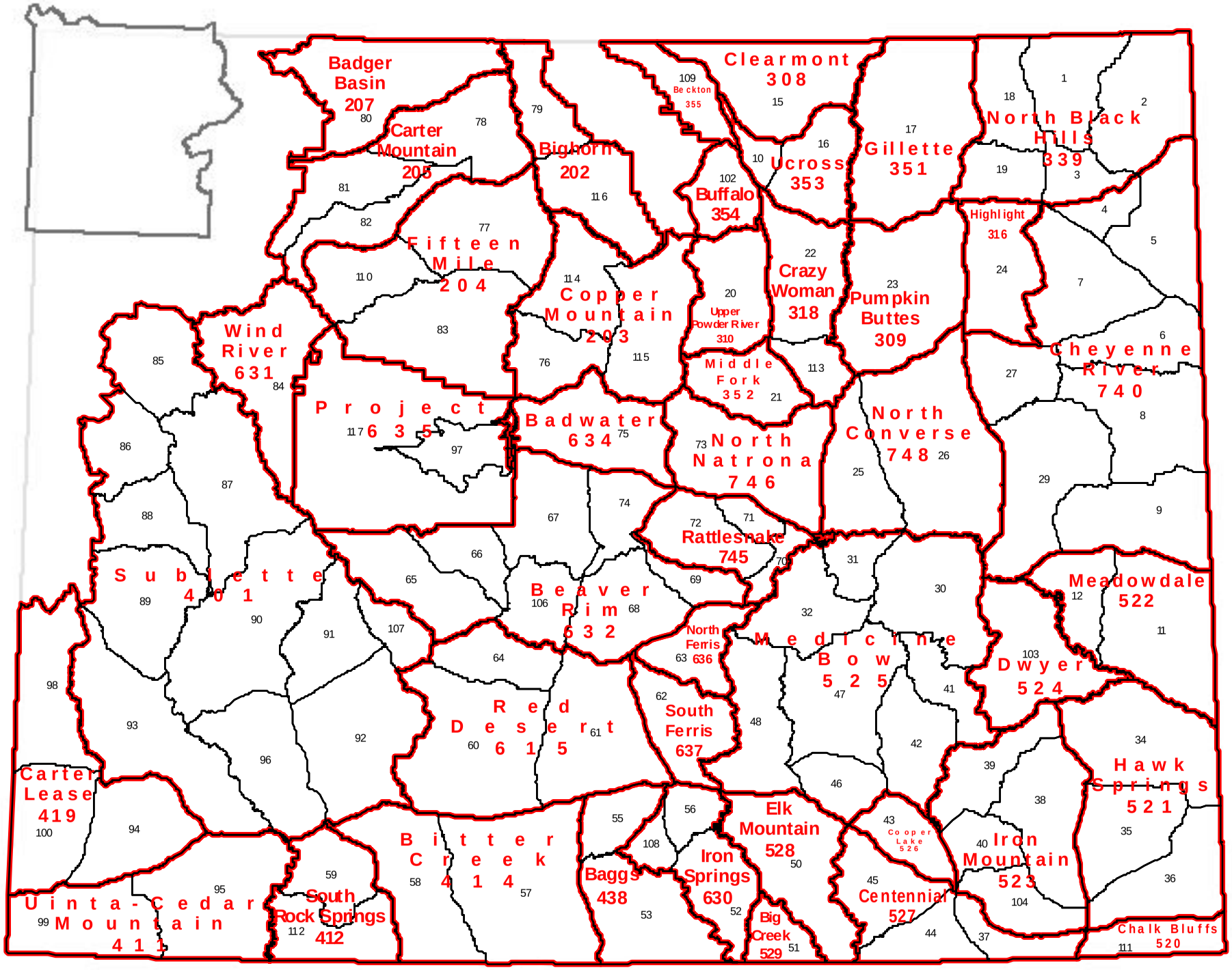
Appendix F

MAPS

Pronghorn Herd Units and Hunt Areas
Mule Deer Herd Units and Hunt Areas
White-tailed Deer Herd Units and Hunt Areas
Elk Herd Units and Hunt Areas
Moose Herd Units and Hunt Areas

2012
Job Completion Report
Sheridan Region
Wyoming Game & Fish Department

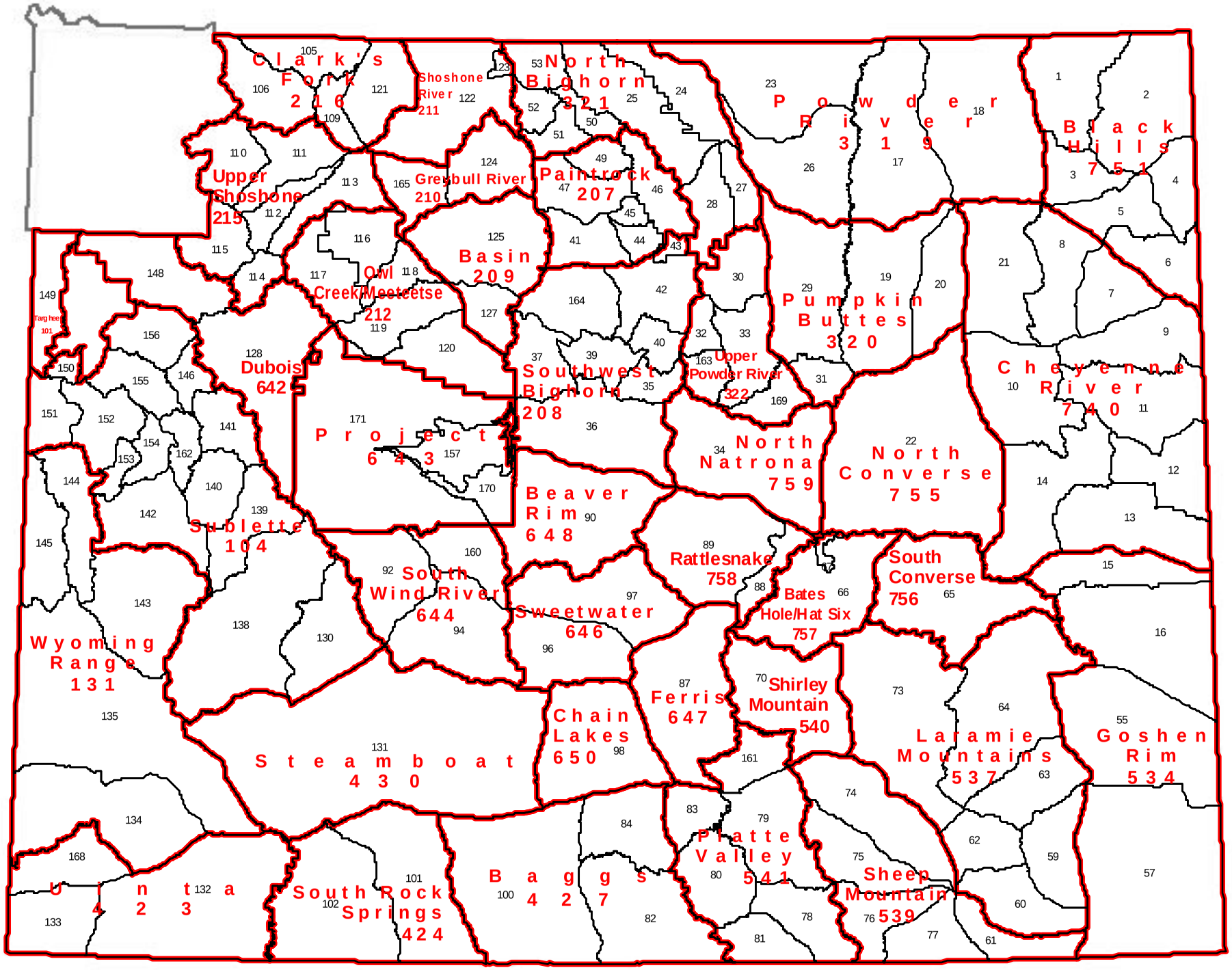
Antelope Hunt Areas and Herd Units



06/08/2011

Note: Herd Units are represented by thicker lines and a generally larger character font

Mule Deer Hunt Areas and Herd Units



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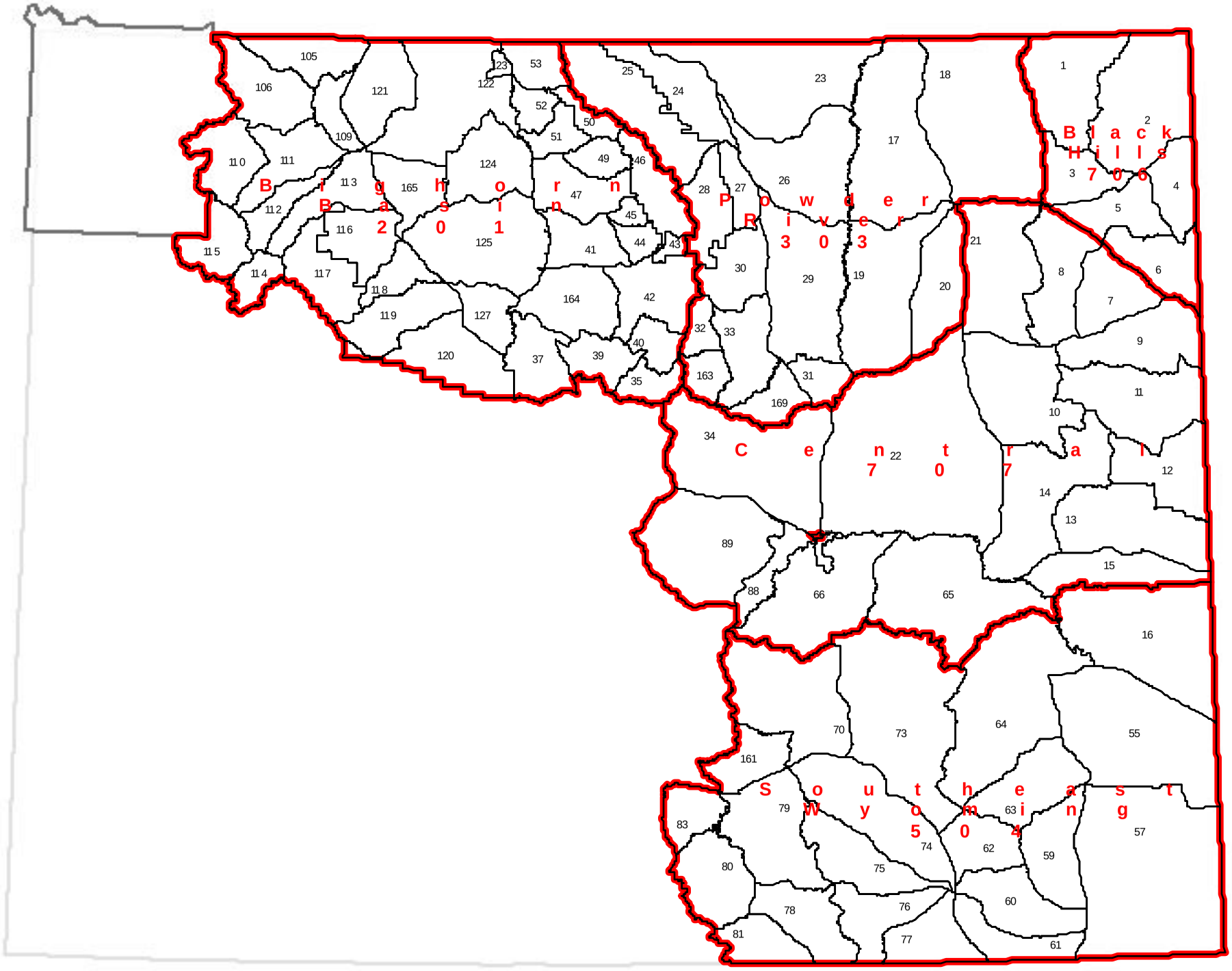
Note: Herd Units are represented by thicker lines and a generally larger character font

White-tailed Deer Hunt Areas and Herd Units



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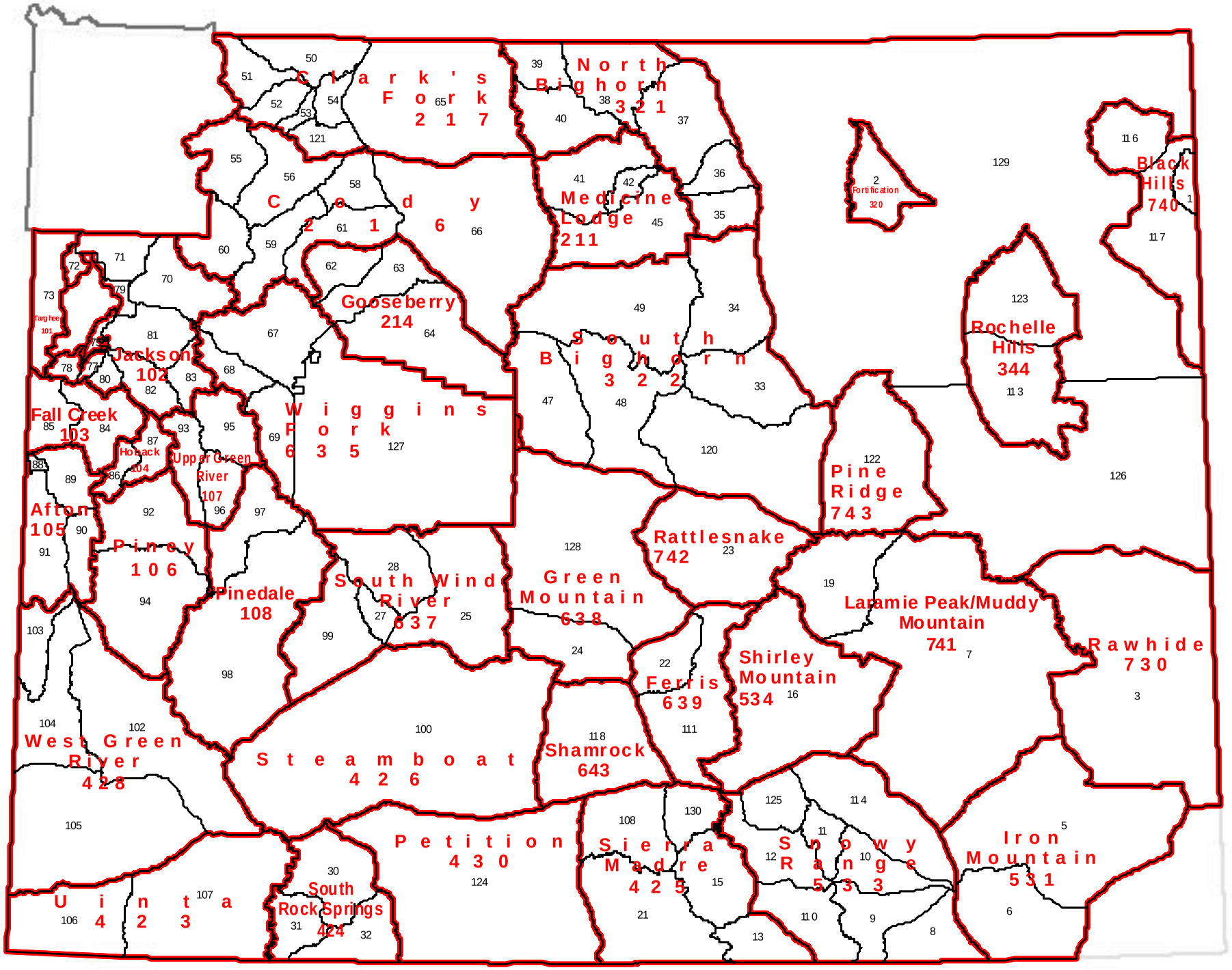
Note: Herd Units are represented by thicker lines and a generally larger character font

Elk Hunt Areas and Herd Units



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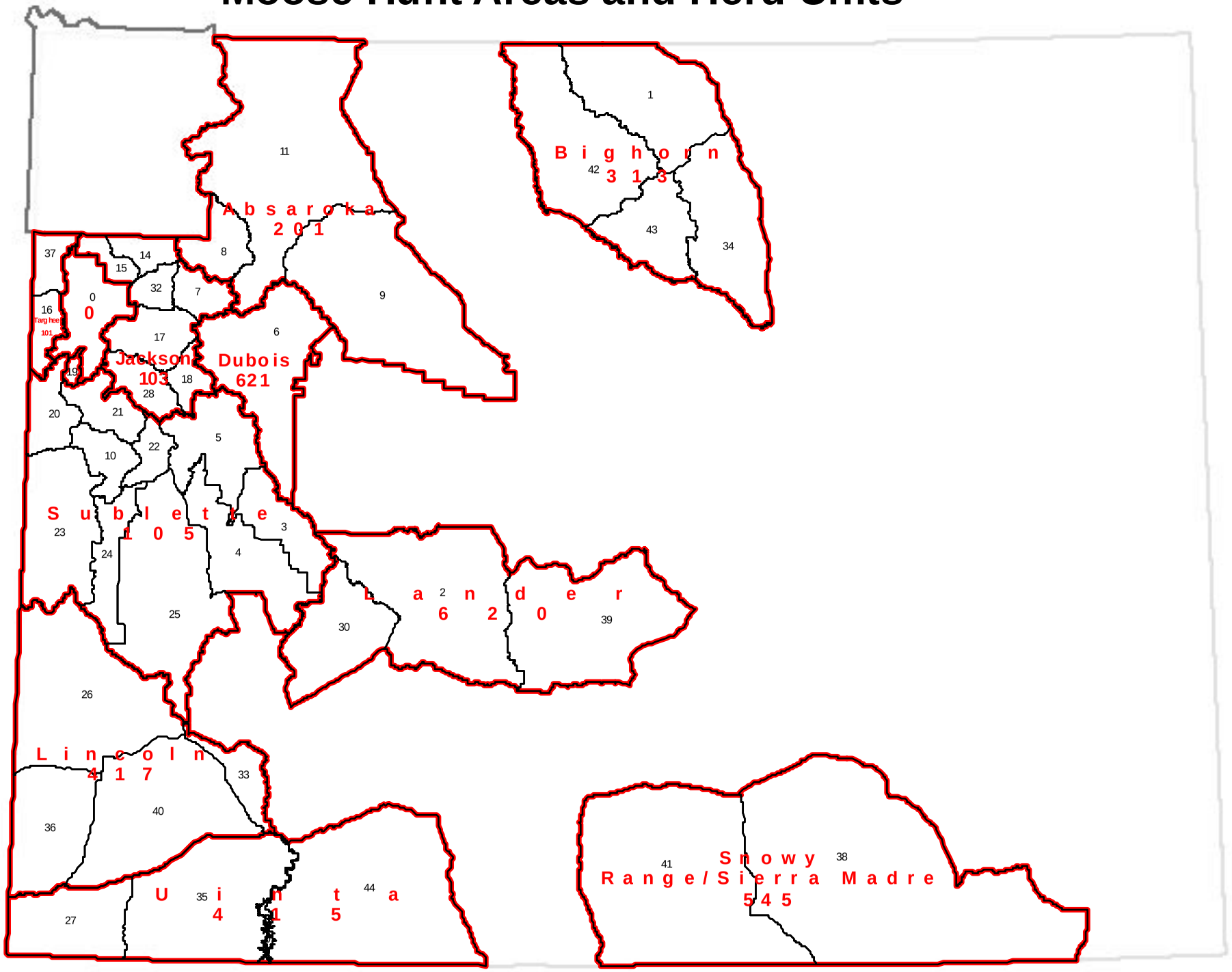
Note: Herd Units are represented by thicker lines and a generally larger character font

Moose Hunt Areas and Herd Units



06/08/2011

Note: Herd Units are represented by thicker lines and a generally larger character font